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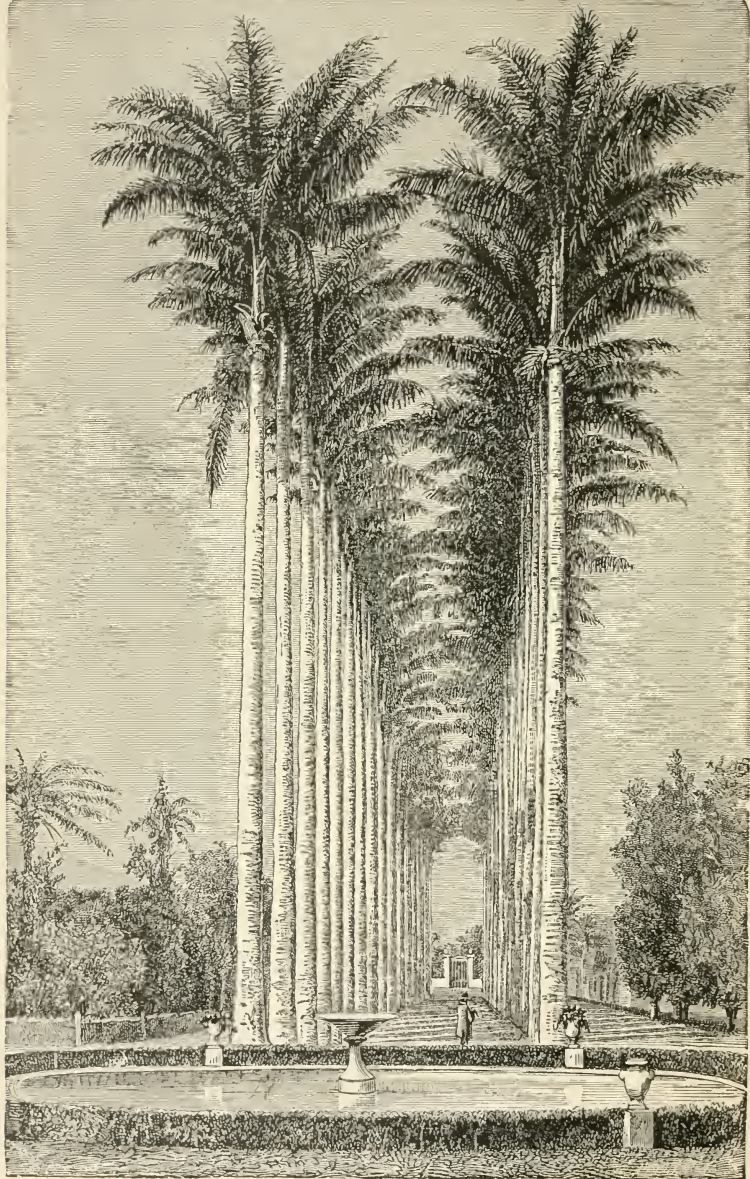
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I Z I L D A

A STORY OF BRAZIL

BY

ANNIE MARIA BARNES

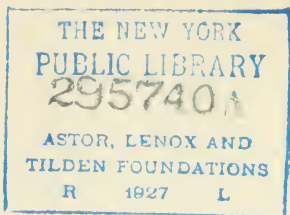
AUTHOR OF "NINTO," "HOW A-CHON-HO-AH FOUND THE
LIGHT," "MATOUCHON," "CHILDREN OF THE
KALAHARI," "HOUSE OF GRASS," ETC.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

NEW YORK

5





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NEW YORK

WITH LOVE,
TO
MISS MARY W. BRUCE.

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IZILDA.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRIP BY TROLLEY.

MISS MARY came through the hall singing. It was a way of Miss Mary's. Nothing ever seemed to put a cloud upon her spirits. However dark the day, the sunshine was always aglow in her heart.

There was the swift rush of feet and a pair of warm young arms went up around Miss Mary's waist. They were not long enough, nor their owner tall enough, for them to reach her neck.

"Has my Janita been a good girl to-day?" asked Miss Mary in a gentle, caressing voice.

"Yes, darling teacher, as good as Janita *could* be. There was only one little time when I lost temper at Emilia. But I asked her quickly to forgive me, that I was sorry, and she did."

"That is my own sweet Janita. Remember always to ask forgiveness when you have done

wrong. And how are the reports from the lessons?"

"Good, dear teacher; better than they have ever been. Miss Lida says if they are as good next month I will have first place on the honor roll."

"Bravo! my Janita. That but strengthens me in the intention I was just forming."

"What is that, dear teacher?" and Janita's large, beautiful brown eyes glowed with expectancy.

"Janita knows Senhor Miguel and Senhora Izabel? Yes, I thought you did. They live twelve miles away on the coffee plantation. Well, to-morrow morning when the birds awaken, the driver will be here with the trolley* to take Miss Mary and any two of her pupils who have been good enough to deserve it for a trip to this glorious *fazenda* (plantation), where it is like a dream of Paradise all the year round. Miss Mary had already decided upon Emilia. Now Janita may go too."

"O Miss Mary, dear, sweet, good teacher!" and Janita threw her arms around Miss Mary's waist again with a little scream of delight.

*A Brazilian vehicle with four wheels, somewhat similar to a spring wagon.

Like the most of her race she was very demonstrative.

Then she sprang away to find Emilia and to rejoice with her over their going; and to tell her again how truly sorry she was she had been even the least bit cross with her.

“Never mind now, dear,” Emilia said, generously. “It wasn’t Janita herself that spoke, but the spirit of bad temper within her.”

“But I ought to get rid of this bad spirit, and I am going to try, dear Emilia, oh, *so* hard! I promised Miss Mary I would. She is so grieved when I let it break out in that way.”

“There is some one else who is deeply grieved, too,” said Emilia, softly.

Janita looked up quickly. Just for the moment she did not understand. Emilia answered the question she saw in her eyes.

“The dear Jesus. Oh, *how* grieved he is when Janita does do wrong.”

“I know that, dear Emilia, and I am going to try never to grieve him any more than I can help. It seems to me that even his picture looks reproachful when Janita does what he would wish she would not do. But oh, Emilia!” she broke off suddenly, “isn’t it glorious that we are to go to Senhor Miguel’s with Miss Mary? And she says we are to spend the

night as well as the day. We can see the coffee-pickers and all they do; and maybe they will let us pick coffee, too."

"I dare say they will. Senhor Miguel is very kind and Senhora Izabel as sweet as she can be. But I do not think," she added after a pause, "that we will find the Dona Izilda inclined to take much notice of us. She is very proud. Do you not remember how haughty she was when she came to the school? Miss Mary hated it so much, for she wanted her to be nice to us."

"But maybe she was only timid," suggested Janita. "At one time she looked like she *did* want to speak to us, but didn't know what to say. As she was going away she gave me a real sweet look out of her eyes. They are such pretty ones, so large and gray, and they just shine when she seems pleased."

"I am glad she did that," said Emilia, heartily. "Maybe she will not be so stiff with us in her own house. Miss Mary, I know, likes her very much. But there is the bell, Janita! We must go to the Bible lesson now."

The mission school where these little girls were pupils was at Piracicaba, a city in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil, three hundred miles inland from Rio. It is reached by rail all the

way, first to Sao Paulo, the capital of the state, and thence in a northwesterly direction by the only English railway in Brazil. Every mile of the way from Sao Paulo is a descent, for Piracicaba is situated in the midst of a great basin. It is, indeed, a quaint and picturesque city, not anything like so large as Sao Paulo, however, and is on the left bank of the Piracicaba River, a small but beautiful stream. The river is navigable to this point, where there are falls, which prevent further navigation. It is thus that the city gets its name, for it means literally, "the place where the fishes stop."

The city is a picturesque one, for it stands in the midst of vari-colored shade trees, its low-roofed houses, red-tiled, and with their walls stuccoed in white, lending a charm to the picture not soon forgotten.

The next morning Janita and Emilia were up with the lark. They could hardly dress fast enough. Suppose the trolley should come ere they were ready? But Miss Mary had told them they need not be in too great a hurry; that the trolley would hardly come ere the sun did. But despite this they were up even before day itself began to break. The first few gray streaks were just showing themselves across the sky as the last knot was tied, the last

ribbon put in its place. Then they sprang down the stairway, two steps at a time, rushed across the hall, and knocked at the door of Miss Mary's room. She was just getting up, and laughed merrily as she saw the two little girls already dressed for the journey.

"Are my Janita and Emilia trying to outrun the sun this morning?" she asked, gaily.

"No, dear teacher," returned Emilia, "but we were afraid we *might* be late, so dressed while we knew we had time."

"Well, it doesn't matter, my dears, only those peepers of yours might have had another half-hour of sleep. They need it, I am sure. I fear they will grow drowsy during the day."

"Oh, no, dear teacher, we think not," Emilia replied. "There will be so much to see."

"That there will!" echoed Janita; "so very much that we shall have to be up and looking, just looking with all our might, night as well as day."

"Which means," said Miss Mary a little reprovingly, "that my Janita is even now reminding me that she will want to stay up for the sight-seeing as late at night as those peepers will allow her ere they grow too heavy to be kept open at all."

Janita looked at her teacher archly. Then she gave a quick little laugh.

"I should like to stay up as long as my dear Miss Mary will let me," she said, persuasively, "especially if the coffee-pickers are to have a *festa*."*

"I dare say they will," returned Miss Mary. "The good Senhora Izabel has promised us all sorts of splendid things. But come now, let us go and have some breakfast, or the trolley will, indeed, be here ere we are ready."

They went down to the dining-room, where they found a breakfast of bread, fish, fruit and coffee awaiting them. They had just finished eating when the merry blast of a horn at the gate caused the two little girls to spring joyously to their feet, and even Miss Mary's face to show a flush of pleasure.

"Oh, there is the trolley now!" cried Janita, excitedly. "Do let us hurry, dear teacher, or they may leave us after all."

"No danger of that," said Miss Mary with a smile, "as we are to be the only passengers this morning."

"Why, how grand that will make us feel!" said Emilia, "like the big quality folks, to be sure!"

* Feast or festival.

Old Manuel helped each one to her place in the trolley, stored away the hand baggage, then, cracking his whip, mounted his own seat, and the mules were off.

They passed down the principal street of the city, a fairly wide one with stone-paved foot walks. On either side were the rows of shops, with their low flat roofs and grated windows. As early as it was, some of the merchants had already opened their doors. The street vendors were crying their wares, some in flat baskets on their heads, others laden upon the backs of donkeys. A group of bare-footed boys had stopped under one of the low-growing trees to adjust matters with reference to some fruit they had joined fortunes to purchase.

The milkmen were going about with their bottles swung over their shoulders; others of them were walking down the middle of the streets driving their cows before them, for it is the custom in many Brazilian cities to milk the cows before the doors of the residences where the milk is sold. This is done in order to make sure of getting the pure article. Following the cows came the poor little calves, so closely muzzled that they could not give even a faint voice of protest.

Old Manuel cracked his whip again, the mules sprang forward into a faster trot, and the great ungainly wheels of the trolley fairly bowled along. Janita clapped her hands yet again and again in her joy, while Emilia and Miss Mary looked at her with smiling faces.

The sun had just come up. His broad rays were everywhere shining, over river, over city, and over the red-tiled roofs of the houses. Everything seemed to catch the light and to laugh and to rejoice in its radiance. Everywhere it gleamed it carried a blessing and a benediction. Even the children in the streets lifted their heads and turned their faces to bathe in its beauty. It touched the river with a deeper glow and made it fairly sing with gladness as it went leaping on its way. It intensified the clear, fresh green of the bananas, the dark, glossy hue of the mangoes, the vivid fringe of the bamboos, and the graceful fronds of the palms, causing each and all to seem as though the very presence of the Creator had been breathed out upon them.

Even old Manuel seemed to catch and to feel the spirit that was over everything, the sweet glad spirit of the morning—of the morning that had come fresh and beautiful from the Creator's hands. A softened look came into his eyes.

He lifted his hat reverently and let the gentle winds stir the gray locks upon his forehead. "It is good," he said to himself with a deep-drawn sigh of satisfaction as he replaced his hat.

They crossed the fine large bridge, six hundred feet or more in length, over the river and just above the falls, then, in a short while, turned toward some woods, and took the road straight for Senhor Miguel's *fuzenda*.

The vegetation on all sides was abundant, the trees tall and fine. In the flowering season many of them were covered with blossoms of a deep rich hue. The undergrowth was quite dense, the road having evidently been cut through it at great expenditure of labor. At almost every turn they saw something to admire, at one time it was a new tree, at another a gorgeous orchid, and yet again a glorious butterfly. Janita and Emilia did long to get out and chase the beautiful creature, not that they would have harmed it, but only that they wanted to see it nearer.

Now they began to meet people coming into the city. Some were riding, but many were walking. They had all sorts of burdens, either upon themselves or upon their donkeys. None of the women wore hats or bonnets. Such as

had their heads protected had them covered with shawls. Many were bareheaded. In Brazil hats and bonnets are a sign of class and of full dress. Working women and servants do not wear them. So these women were going along, many of them with their heads entirely bare. Even their feet had but little covering, merely a sole of raw-hide strapped to the foot with leather strings. The men were nearly all barefooted, and were clad simply in an undershirt and trousers of cotton cloth. They wore wide-brimmed hats of straw or wool, with handkerchiefs knotted about their necks. Now and then a child was in the group that passed. One little girl attracted their attention particularly. She had such bright eyes and such an intelligent face, though she was so poorly clad. Her dress of blue calico, made in a quaint way—very much like that of an old woman—was soiled and torn. She had on no stockings, and her *chinellas** were broken and all run down at the heels. An old ragged shawl was pinned over her head, on the top of which was balanced a basket of fruit. To her, Miss Mary and the little girls gave a quick, sympathetic nod while they passed her a gay "*bom dia*" (good day).

* A cheap sort of slipper worn by children in Brazil.

She bowed and smiled in return. Their notice of her seemed to have carried to her much happiness. Miss Mary saw her wistful look, and it went at once to her heart. Besides, she had noticed the basket of fruit, and a good resolution struck her. She called to old Manuel to stop the trolley; then she motioned to the child to approach. In exchange for her fruit they gave her several copper coins, the number of which made her eyes glow more brightly than ever.

“How I do wish she could go to our school,” said Janita, as she gazed after her earnestly.

Janita had such a tender, sympathetic heart, and she had found the school where her dear Miss Mary and others taught to be such a sweet, restful place that she longed for every unhappy-looking child she saw to come and share in its blessings. Especially did she feel drawn to this little girl, for there was something in her face that appealed to her strangely. Janita did not understand it. Doubtless if she had been older, and had spent a generous portion of her years in thinking of others as well as of herself, she would have recognized it as the hungry heart speaking out to the sympathetic one.

“I am afraid she has an unhappy home,”

said Janita again as they drove along. "She does not look as if she had any one to love her."

"No, she does not," replied Emilia, in the same sympathetic tone that Janita had used. "Oh, Miss Mary, do you reckon she knows of Jesus?"

Emilia's eyes were swimming with tears and her voice trembled as she asked the question.

Miss Mary's own eyes were moist as she replied: "I am afraid not, Emilia, dear." Then, after a pause, she added, "I do wish we had asked her; at least that we had said other words to her besides the ones necessary to buy her fruit. There was, doubtless, a golden opportunity that we let slip, my darling," and Miss Mary sighed.

"I am afraid so, dear teacher," returned Emilia, with the quaintness and sweetness of the little old woman that she was. "But do not sigh. Perhaps we will meet the little girl again."

"I do most earnestly hope so," replied Miss Mary in fervent tones. Something about the child's face and in her manner had struck her too. Both had given an appeal her tender heart could not resist.

The way was very hilly now and the soil had

a red tinge pleasing to the eye, especially when seen through patches of green shrubbery. Now and then they came to a granite formation, or to one of brown loam. In some places the hills were very steep and rugged, and for long stretches there had been no effort made to cultivate the country. In some spots the plow could not be used at all, and so the hoe became the only implement of cultivation. It is generally two or three times the size of the hoe used in our own country, and, of course, is thus rendered very hard to wield.

There were some fences between the different estates. These were usually of rails laid upon crotched stakes. Some of the division lines, however, consisted merely of ditches with embankments thrown up on either side.

They passed one or two coffee plantations on the way, but there was not one anything like the one to which they were going, for Senhor Miguel was the wealthiest planter in all that section. The white stuccoed houses of the planters made a pretty picture shining through the trees. Around some there were beautiful gardens, with wide walks bordered with palms, bananas, and other tropical trees and shrubs. Some of the trees had shed their leaves, for it was now the Brazilian winter. Others, again,

stay green all the year round. The houses of the poor which they passed were nothing like so pleasing to the eye, only as one now and then presented the evidence of a little effort at outside adornment. Generally, these houses were built of unburned bricks, bricks that are simply left to harden in the sun. These bricks are consequently of a brown or earth color. The roofs were thatched with palm stalks, and there were no glass windows, only wooden shutters. Around these huts were patches of ground fenced in with upright poles, very irregular as to height. In rear of the huts were small fields where crops of corn and mandioca were planted and harvested.

The sun climbed higher and higher and it began to grow warm, although it was the winter season. They were glad that the trolley had a cover, for the sun's rays were strong. During the winter season in Brazil there are many days in which the sun shines for several hours with a summer-like warmth.

They were very much amused at a great lumbering ox-cart that they saw coming down one of the hills. It was the largest and most ungainly they had ever seen, and as it came it made a terrible noise, squeaking just as dismally as it could. Another funny thing about

it was that the axles revolved with the wheels.

“I should think it took a heap of lumber to make that cart,” said Janita. “I am very sorry for the oxen.”

“So am I,” said Emilia. “Why, the man must have taken a whole tree for his cart. Poor oxen!”

Miss Mary asked the man why he didn't grease his wheels.

He looked at her in astonishment. Then he replied that he was surprised she should ask him such a question. Why, did she not know that the noise was the very thing that the oxen needed to spur them along? The louder and more piercing the noise, just in the same degree were the oxen induced to move.

Miss Mary tried to reason with him, to show how it would be easier on his oxen if the wheels could move without friction, and less damaging, too, to his vehicle; but he was beyond the power of reasoning to reach. So, after some moments, she gave it up in despair, and he proceeded upon his way with a bland smile upon his face.

One thing that engaged the attention of the little girls very much was the number of ant-hills they saw on the way. These were very

smooth and hard in appearance, of the color of the soil where they were made, and sometimes were as much as four or five feet in height.

“Oh, what beautiful play-houses they would make!” cried Janita, clapping her hands. “I do wish we had some like them in the yard at Piracicaba.”

“I do not,” said Emilia, quickly. “Why, Janita, have you forgotten what trouble we have with those already there? Think how the ants come into the house and what damage they do!”

“Yes,” returned Janita, quickly. “They do! I had forgotten how they ate up poor Carolina’s birthday cake, the whole of it almost, till there were not even many crumbs left. Often, too, they have made, oh, *such* dreadful raids on our own things! Yes, indeed, I believe I will not wish for any more ants at present in the yard, even though it were to get those beautiful play-houses.”

“You could not play in them nor with them, even if you had them,” said Emilia, consolingly, “for I am sure the ants would contest your right every time, and not in a very pleasant way either. Has Janita forgotten, too, how once she put her hand under the fig-

bush to get some figs and the big black ants stung her?"

"No," returned Janita with a smile, "I have not." Then she added, "I guess I'll say no more about the ants just now, dear Emilia."

CHAPTER II.

AT SENHOR MIGUEL'S.

AT ten o'clock they came in sight of Senhor Miguel's estate. It stretched away on every side as far as the eye could reach. The little girls clapped their hands with delight. How beautiful it looked! especially the great fields of coffee trees. These were planted in regular rows, and between them were the gleaming strips of red soil. This gave them a striped appearance, of alternate green and red, very dazzling to the eye. The trees were from ten to twelve feet in height. Near the top they had a bluish tinge. This indicated that the berry had reached its ripened state.

They drove under a high-arched gateway, and then turned into an avenue of palms. In a little while the house of Senhor Miguel came into full view. It stood in the midst of a grove of tall, beautiful trees. When these were in blossom the air was filled with their fragrance. The house was two stories in height, the upper portion being built with a turret. The whole stood on a high foundation, so that many steps had to be ascended ere they reached the wide

hall where Senhora Izabel stood to welcome them. She embraced Miss Mary, spoke loud words of the most cordial welcome, and then, turning to the two little girls, grasped their hands while she put her lips to the cheek of each.

She then clapped her hands, when a servant appeared to conduct them to their room. Here water was furnished them and a refreshing bath was taken. Then Senhora Izabel herself appeared to lead them to the sitting-room. The furniture of this was very plain. There was no carpet on the floor, but it was very fresh and glistening from a thorough scrubbing, and had several rugs placed carelessly about. The sofas and chairs had rather straight backs, the seats being of cane. Some books and newspapers were on a table, while in two corners of the room hammocks were swung up.

They had not long been seated when Senhora Izabel began to call rather loudly, "Joachima! Joachima!"

In a short while, and in response to the call, a little girl of nine or ten years came in. She was a very bright-eyed child, with quaint, polite manners, exceedingly attractive. She had glossy, luxuriant hair, which was hanging in

two long plaits down her back. She offered her cheek and gave her hand to Miss Mary, then her hand, in turn, to each of the little girls. After this she went and sat down somewhat demurely in a corner, from which she did not venture a word except when spoken to. Then it was very shy responses, indeed, she gave to the questions.

“How are the chickens, Joachima?” ventured Miss Mary.

“Very well, ma'am, thank you,” returned Joachima.

“And the calves and the kids? Do the kids bleat as much as ever, Joachima?”

“Yes, ma'am, only some of them are grown now.”

“And so, of course, have learned better ways,” finished Miss Mary.

Joachima gave a little sly nod of assent.

“And did the brown calf turn out to be a black one, after all?”

“No, ma'am, it is red.”

All laughed heartily at this. Just as Miss Mary was going to put another question to Joachima, a great commotion was heard in the next room, and, a few seconds later, two little girls came rushing in. They were evidently twins, and seemed to be about six years old.

They were greatly excited, so much so that their faces were very red and their eyes in a glow. They were cute little girls, and were dressed simply and quaintly in long dresses like little old women, while they had knots of bright ribbon at throat and wrist. Their *chinnellas* had much red in them, and so had the stockings, at least what small portion of them could be seen below the hems of their dresses.

“Inez! Maneco!” cried their mother, reprovingly.

Inez turned round, faced her mother and then looked with a frown at Maneco, who was dragging an immense rag doll by the arm.

“Now, there, mamma, do not say ‘Inez,’ if you please, for it is all Maneco! You can see she has taken the dear Silverita, and will not let me have her.”

“But I want her with me to swing in my hammock,” said Maneco.

“And I want her in mine!” declared Inez. “Mamma, do make her give me Silverita.”

“Mamma, you won’t make me do any such thing! I know,” protested Maneco, with rising wrath. “She has had her nearly all the morning, now.”

“I haven’t!”

“But you have.”

"You hush! I *know* what I say."

The two little girls would evidently have soon come to a regular collision—for the Senhora Izabel showed no disposition to make any very vigorous interference, so lax is parental discipline in Brazil—but just at that moment a gay voice said:

"Whoever can beat me up the steps and get to my room-door first shall have another doll, beside which the fair Silverita's charms shall sink into utter insignificance!"

For one brief second the form of a tall girl with very bright eyes showed itself in the doorway, then disappeared, while there was a rush of scampering feet, as, with a little cry of expectancy, the twins turned and dashed away to the chase.

In a few moments Izilda came back to make her apologies to Miss Mary and to her two girl visitors for not coming in when she had first appeared. After greeting them cordially, she said:

"I knew I had to act then and there, or you would have been treated to quite a scene. These babies of ours hardly know how to hold their tempers, especially when we do not give them much help in that direction," she added, apologetically. "I guess the ruffled feelings of

both are quite soothed in this time, especially as I had a rag doll in waiting for each."

"You sly rogue," said her mother, "why did you not bring them down at once?"

"Because I wanted them to be all the more appreciated because of the expectancy there was in it," she returned, with a gay smile. Then taking a seat beside Miss Mary, to whom she had already offered her hand, she continued:

"Miss Mary, I can't tell you how glad I am that you have come. I have been wanting you to do so for some time."

At this point she stopped, evidently a little embarrassed, as though she had said more than she intended to say.

Miss Mary appeared not to notice this confusion. She replied:

"I am glad, too, that I could come, Izilda. We are very busy at the school now, and it is very hard for me to get away, that is, for any length of time."

"And now that you *are* here, you are going to stay until day after to-morrow," continued Izilda, positively. "Both my father and mother say so. You must *not* miss the *festu*. That is to-morrow night. It is the regular Festa of St. John. Such a time as there will

be! O Miss Mary, you must not even think of going until that is over! And I know these young friends of mine will want to stay, too."

With these words the Dona Izilda looked at Janita and Emilia with one of her most engaging smiles. How beautiful it made her! Janita ventured to speak:

"Yes, Dona Izilda, we should like very much indeed to stay if only Miss Mary is willing," and Janita looked at the teacher wistfully.

"Miss Mary *must* stay," said the Senhora Izabel, emphatically. "A half-day and one night are entirely too little to spend after so long a journey. Why, you will not be rested at all! Then there is the Festa of St. Johns. My! you just can *not* miss that!"

Miss Mary had expected something like this, and so had come prepared for it, though she had not even intimated to the little girls the probability of a longer stay. She thought it best for it to come out after they had arrived at Senhor Miguel's, for had she raised their expectations at starting there might have been a disappointment. Now that she was urged so cordially, she was not long in giving her consent. She really desired to stay, not only on her own account, but because of the two little

girls, to whom she knew every hour of the visit would bring such intense pleasure.

Janita and Emilia were nearly wild with delight. Everything was passing off so beautifully, for was not the Dona Izilda, whom, to tell the truth, they had somewhat dreaded, proving herself the very soul of hospitality?

Meanwhile the Dona Izilda kept up the conversation with Miss Mary, not forgetting to include in it, every now and then, both Emilia and Janita. She was a charming girl of thirteen or thereabouts, though rather tall for her age. She had the regular, delicate features of the handsome women of her race, very black hair, which she kept gracefully arranged, and deep, earnest eyes of gray that looked at you fully and squarely when she talked. They could be kind, too, and earnest. But as charming as she was, Miss Mary could not refrain from a little sigh of pity as the conversation went on. The Dona Izilda had been very superficially educated. It is true that she was not old enough, by at least three years, to have gone through school; but she was not even sufficiently advanced for her age. Miss Mary wondered why she had been so neglected in this respect, especially as her father was abundantly able to send her for education anywhere she desired to

go. She supposed it was because the Senhora Izabel disliked to part, even for a time, with this dear daughter, who was of so much help to her in many ways. But whatever she might lack in an educational sense, she certainly had very pleasing manners, as also had the little Joachima. They were not only kind but considerate, and had others in their thoughts as well as themselves. It was only now and then that Izilda assumed a haughty air, and that seemed to be when she did not understand people, or when she met them for the first time and they appeared constrained with her.

This sweetness of manner on the part of the two older girls, and the consideration they showed for others, gave Miss Mary some surprise, especially when she compared it with the ill-behavior of the smaller ones—for Miss Mary had seen this more than once before—and recalled Senhora Izabel's rather loose way of administering family government. Miss Mary realized with a sigh that this was apt to be the case with so many Brazilian mothers. She had witnessed similar scenes again and again, always with keen pain. They felt the effect of it in the school. It was so hard to get under control those children who had had none at home, and who had only "to make a

great fuss," as they termed it, in order to have their way. Often and often the mothers yielded the point just to get them quiet.

Ah, yes, indeed, Miss Mary knew only too well the slack moral training of children by parents in Brazil. Therefore the gentle manners of the Dona Izilda and of Joachima, their ready obedience to their mother, and their evident desire to please others, could not but fill Miss Mary with surprise as well as pleasure. She supposed that much of it was due to a naturally sweet temperament guided by the best impulses.

Soon Senhor Miguel came in, and, in the most cordial way, bade them welcome.

He was a large man with heavy features, but with a kindly eye and very pleasing manners. Especially was he thoughtful and affable in his own house, and in all Brazil there was not a more delightful host than he. He knew just how to make his guests feel on the very best terms with themselves and with every one else.

He told them that great preparations were being made for the feast on the following night; and at once informed Miss Mary and the two little girls that they were fully expected to stay, and that no denial would be taken. He showed

his pleasure when he learned that the arrangements had already been made and consent given to stay.

In a little while dinner was announced. It was served in a very large room with plenty of windows in it, which admitted both light and air. The table was long, and spread for many more than sat down to it. This is usually the custom in a Brazilian gentleman's house, especially one living in the country, for it is never known when guests will arrive nor in what number, so great is the hospitality known to exist on the part of the master and mistress.

The dinner was a sumptuous one, at least so considered for Brazil, though there were doubtless many things that would not have pleased the palate of one unaccustomed to them. Miss Mary and the little girls fell to eating with the greatest relish, for to two of them, of course, everything was natural, while, through many years' residence in the country, Miss Mary had acquired a taste for the native diet.

There were many kinds of vegetables, cabbage, okra, turnips, squashes, beans, and others. The cabbage, however, was altogether unlike our cabbage, for it was what was known as palm cabbage; that is, it consisted of the soft pith from the green stalks of a species of palm.

It was nicely cooked, but highly seasoned. Another dish was xu-xu (pronounced shu-shu). This has the taste of a very delicate squash, and it doubtless is akin to the squash, though the vine on which it grows is a tall climber and the leaves are not at all like those of the squash. The fruit itself is green, furry, and rather pear-shaped. There was a variety of meats. All, however, smelled very strong of garlic. One dish was composed chiefly of ribs of beef with sweet potatoes, though it had a dressing that seasoned it highly. For dessert there was fruit, bananas, oranges, guavas, pomegranates, jaboticabas,* etc., a delicious fresh cheese almost like curd, eaten with wafers; a pudding that had much fruit in it; and hominy served with a sauce consisting of sugar, grated cocoa, and cinnamon. Of course, there was coffee, the very blackest and strongest kind, but all, being used to it, drank with a relish. Even the little girls were allowed to have their share.

After dinner they went to the parlor, or *sala*, as it is called in Brazil. This, too, was quite a large room, and its furniture was much more

* The *jaboticaba* is a fruit somewhat resembling a black plum. It is of delicious flavor. It grows wild, and one peculiarity of it is that it has no stem, but sticks close to the bark of the large limbs of the trees.

pretentious than that seen anywhere else about the house. Like the sitting-room, it had no carpet on the floor, though the rugs were numerous and handsome. The sofas, chairs, etc., were in finely-carved rosewood framing, the seats being principally of cane. Upholstery does not last long in this country of intense heat and of destructive insects. There was a piano, two large and handsome mirrors, for the Brazilians are very fond of looking at themselves, and everywhere a profusion of flowers, both natural and artificial. Five or six immense candlesticks, with white or colored candles, were sitting upon brackets or upon other receptacles. These were sometimes used at the chapel when the priest came, and often lighted for guests at the house.

At Miss Mary's request, the Dona Izilda seated herself at the piano and gave them some sweet music. She and Joachima were in the midst of a duet, when there was a little noise without, and a servant came to announce that the Father Anselmo had arrived and desired to speak to Senhor Miguel.

The hospitable planter went at once to meet him, and, a few moments thereafter, conducted him into the *sala*. The priest frowned perceptibly when he saw Miss Mary and the two

young girls from the Piracicaba school, though he managed to get through the greetings gracefully. He did not linger long, however, as it seemed impossible for him to recover his ease of manner. He soon stated the object of his visit, that of having the announcement made that he would hold services in the little chapel on the following Sunday. When he arose to take his leave he merely bowed to Miss Mary and to Janita and Emilia, though he shook hands cordially with all the others. Senhor Miguel followed him to the door, for the priest had given him to understand that he desired to speak with him a few moments in private.

"I am glad he is gone," said Izilda, with charming frankness. "He quite gives me a chill every time he is here."

"Izilda!" spoke her mother, reprovingly.

"It is the truth, mamma, and there is no need to conceal it. I just can't feel at ease with Father Anselmo."

"Well, if you have such feelings, I think it very imprudent to speak them before others, especially before the children," and the Senhora Izabel glanced warningly in the direction of Inez and Maneco.

Luckily, they had not heard, they were too busy with their dolls.

Izilda seemed relieved. She had not desired to cause trouble, either for herself or for others; she was only impulsive. Besides, she did not really wish to be too harsh in her judgment of the priest. But he certainly did make her feel uncomfortable, nay, shivery, as she had declared. Just why, Izilda could not tell, for he was very affable to her, as he was to all.

"I am very sorry if I wrong Father Anselmo, mamma," she continued, going up to her mother and laying her hand upon her mother's shoulder, "and I will not again speak of him before the children. This I promise you."

"I am glad to hear that, Izilda. You are too impulsive, my dear; you speak your thoughts out too freely. Some time this is going to get you into very serious trouble if you do not mind. And remember, my daughter," she continued, in a lower tone, "that Father Anselmo is our spiritual adviser."

"Yes, I remember, mamma," but she did not look as if the remembrance gave her any pleasure. On the other hand, it seemed to leave quite a grave, even sad, expression upon her face.

They all adjourned to their rooms now, to take their regular after-dinner *siesta*. This

lasted until late in the evening, almost until sundown. Then coffee was sent them in the most charming of cups, and very soon thereafter Izilda came to conduct them for a walk about the place.

They visited the poultry and stock-yards, then went to the fish-pond, to the vegetable garden, and finally to the orchard.

On the way there they were joined by two immense greyhounds, to whom Izilda called affectionately and who came bounding to overtake her. Janita and Emilia were quite afraid of them at first, but when they saw how gentle they were, they began, too, to stroke their beautiful heads, and to pet them in other ways. The dogs were delighted, and showed their delight by gamboling about their heels.

There were many orange and peach trees in the orchard, also guavas, jaboticabas, and pomegranates. They saw, too, a tree known as the *cajueiro*. It was very large and spreading at the top, with rather small leaves, and bore an aromatic fruit. From this a drink like lemonade is made. Another tree that interested them was the *pinera*, or cotton-tree. This tree was very tall and also had a large top, but its leaves were long and green, somewhat resembling those of the willow. It was several

feet in diameter at the base, and when in flower had large pink blossoms.

While they were in the orchard the sun began to set, and, oh, what a sunset it was! grand, beautiful, glorious, just such a sunset as is seen only in tropical climates.

As they stood and watched the splendors fade slowly out of the west, Miss Mary said, with a sigh :

“What a pity that it is so soon gone, for it seems too beautiful to fade! And what a pity, too, that there are no long sweet after-twilights such as we know in the States; those precious twilights in which one's heart feels so perceptibly drawn to communion with itself and with its God.”

She had evidently for the moment forgotten, and was speaking more to herself than to her listeners. But Izilda drew near and slipped her hand within Miss Mary's while she said, softly

“It must be very beautiful. I have heard of it before. Oh, I do wish we *could* have such twilights here! It is too dreadful to see the dark come right upon the beautiful sunlight. I have often wished the change could not be so sudden nor so great. It is not a sweet time to sit down and think, at least not such an one as

you describe, Miss Mary, for the darkness seems so real."

"But even in the darkness one's thoughts can go to him who made the light," said Miss Mary, looking at her tenderly, wistfully.

"To him?" inquired Izilda.

"Yes, to him, our God, our Maker, the dear Lord of all the world."

"Our Father in heaven," added Izilda, softly, nay, reverently, while there was a look in her eyes such as Miss Mary had never seen there before. But it made her heart rejoice to see it.

CHAPTER III.

ANOTHER VISITOR.

THAT evening they had a serenade from the coffee-pickers, who gave them some really good music, playing on several stringed instruments and tambourines. At the close the Senhora Izabel treated them to coffee and cake, while Senhor Miguel made them a little speech. Even Miss Mary had to say a few words, for they did not seem satisfied to depart until she had done so. She had met some of them before, spoken kind words, and in this way their hearts were won. Her own heart yearned to say to them different words from any she had yet spoken, but she did not think it prudent just then.

That night Miss Mary and the two little girls slept in one of the great guest-chambers, for there were several in this hospitable house. The one they occupied had two beds. They looked very inviting in their clean, white spreads, and with a gay-colored blanket folded over the foot of each. But the beds were not at all luxurious, such as we have in this country, for there were no springs. Neither are feather-

beds known in Brazil. The pillows, however, were quite pleasant, being stuffed with a silk straw, called in Brazil *paena de rede*. This straw grows in a pod on a tree, the pod being larger but very much like that we find on mullein stalks. The pillows had a very agreeable odor, from their cases having been put away between the leaves of some faintly pungent shrub, very much like our old-fashioned "life-everlasting"

The next morning the guests were aroused by a tap on the door. Miss Mary cried, "come in," when a servant appeared, bearing a tiny cup of black coffee for each, and a glass of warm, foaming milk. The latter is considered a great delicacy in Brazil, and very good for the health. However, the taste for it has to be cultivated, as it has sugar in it and is served without straining.

After the milk and coffee were taken, Miss Mary and the girls lay in their bed, chatting a little while; then they arose, dressed themselves, and went out for a draught of the pure morning air.

As early as it was, they found most of the household up, and many warm greetings and gay good-mornings were exchanged.

The Brazilians, as a rule, arise with the sun,

or almost with it, and do business and even go visiting before breakfast.

They found the Senhora Izabel very solicitous as to how they had slept. She declared she felt sure they had rested badly, and that they found the bed the very worst in the world. This is the custom in Brazil. The truly hospitable hostess always demeans everything proffered her guests, regretting that it is not a thousand times better.

Of course Miss Mary assured her that they had slept well and found the bed excellent, which was a truthful representation on Miss Mary's part, as she had long ago grown used to the hard beds of Brazil.

Breakfast was served about nine o'clock. It consisted of fruit, bread, fried potatoes, fried eggs in peas, roasted ribs of pork, a stew of beef, with rice, and two or three kinds of bread. There was coffee again, black and strong, and plenty of milk and cheese, but no butter. The butter had all to come from abroad, and sometimes the supply ran out, even with the wealthiest planters. The potatoes were Irish potatoes, and they are something of a luxury in Brazil, being nothing like so plentiful as in this country.

They had not more than finished the

meal and adjourned to the sitting-room, when the announcement was made that a horseman was coming up the drive, or, rather, a man on mule back. The young people ran at once to the window, and soon some rather excited words from Janita told who it was.

“It is Brother Raynor! It is Brother Raynor!” she cried. “Oh! I am so glad he is coming.”

Deep in her own heart Miss Mary echoed this note of gladness. Was the missionary coming on a mission, or was it only a visit? Fervently she prayed that his heart had grown brave and that he was coming on a mission. She knew what courage it took to face the religion of Rome in any of its strongholds. But somehow she felt that this courage had been given him, for the last time she had spoken with him he had told her that he felt it was his duty to apply to Senhor Miguel for permission to preach to the coffee-pickers on his plantation. And now he was coming! How fervently Miss Mary’s heart prayed for him, that grace and strength might be given.

The missionary came in. He looked jaded and worn, for he had ridden all the way from

Piracicaba that morning. But in his eyes was a fire, the meaning of which Miss Mary caught, and, oh, how her heart leaped! Though the servant might be tired in body, yet the spirit was enkindled with force and fervor for the Master's cause.

Janita and Emilia made no effort to conceal their joy at his coming. Miss Mary met him with a fervent pressure of the hand and a light in her eyes he understood only too well. Even the little Joachima let her hand linger many seconds in his. But with the others he did not fare so well. It is true the Dona Izilda greeted him kindly, but she seemed embarrassed, reserved, keeping her eye partly upon her mother as she gave him her hand. As to the Senhora Izabel, she showed very plainly that his visit was not just what she would have had. Nevertheless, her hospitality came at once to the surface, for she had him conducted to a chamber, where he might refresh himself, and thence to the dining-room, where the very best breakfast, under the circumstances, was served to him.

Senhor Miguel was in the sitting-room when the missionary returned to it. He, at least, did not show any coldness or displeasure at the visit. On the other hand, he greeted the visitor

cordially, and was soon in the midst of an earnest conversation.

After dinner Mr. Raynor courageously made known the object of his visit to the *fazenda*, and boldly asked permission to preach to the pickers and other laborers on the place that evening.

Senhor Miguel was disturbed by the request, and showed his disturbance plainly. Not that he seemed to have any direct opposition to it, but only that he was perplexed in his mind as to the wisdom of granting it. The Senhor was not so close nor so ardent a Catholic as his wife. On the other hand, he entertained very liberal views, one of which was that every man had the right to the religion of his choice. Feeling this way, he was constantly arousing the indignation and even the wrath—though they had the policy to keep it concealed as much as possible—of the Father Anselmo and of his associates. But the Senhor's wife was not so reserved. She frankly told her husband again and again what she thought of the looseness of his views, to say nothing of what she termed his downright disloyalty to his church. It was, doubtless, that the Senhora Izabel was instigated to these accusations and reproaches through the agency of the Father Anselmo and

others of his brother priests, for it was plainly noticeable that she always made these attacks upon the Senhor following the visit of one of the priests.

The Senhor felt the impulse to grant the missionary's request then and there. He didn't understand why one man couldn't be allowed as fair a showing as another. If the missionary had something he really thought good and wanted to tell others about it, he didn't see why he couldn't have the permission to go ahead and tell it, the people being left to judge for themselves. But the Senhor was a dutiful husband, though he might not be so faithful a churchman, and he therefore felt that he ought to speak to Senhora Izabel first, especially as she would have the summoning of many of the women. But secretly the Senhor resolved that the missionary should have the opportunity if it were in his power to bring it about.

Between the planter and the missionary very cordial relations existed. Senhor Miguel sincerely admired the many sterling qualities he had found in the missionary. But there was another reason still. Mr. Raynor had more than once given him advice and dropped him hints that had benefited him considerably in a

commercial sense. This he was enabled to do through intimate association with certain business men who, to some extent, controlled the markets. Thus the planter not only felt the sincerest regard for the missionary, but gratitude towards him, as well. The missionary, too, liked the Senhor, for he recognized in him a sturdy manliness, as well as an honesty of purpose that would, and did, make him a man whose friendship was worth cultivating. Therefore he felt no qualms of fear in preferring his request to preach to the laborers; but at the same time he knew full well the Senhora Izabel's feelings with reference to the subject, as well as the control she was under on the part of the priests. Thus he was not unprepared for the answer the Senhor Miguel gave him. It was to the effect that he would consult with the Senhora Izabel, and that, if it were in his power to arrange for the services, it would be done. At the same time he told the missionary that it was not a very favorable occasion, as the laborers were getting ready to celebrate the Festa of St. John that very evening. However, he hoped to give him the hour just before sundown, as the festivities would not begin until nine o'clock.

When the Senhora Izabel learned of the mis-

sionary's request, she expressed her disapproval in the most decided terms.

"It will *never* do in the world!" she declared, emphatically. "The Father Anselmo will be *so* angry!"

"What has *he* to do with it?" questioned Senhor Miguel, and with every evidence of a rising wrath. "Am not *I* master *here*?" and his eyes blazed unpleasantly.

The Senhora Izabel saw her mistake, and hastened to be milder.

"But think, husband," she continued. "The Father Anselmo is the guardian of the church. He has to be on the lookout for anything and everything that threatens her safety."

"I cannot see how this request of the missionary, simply to state his own views on religious subjects, can bring any harm to the church," protested Senhor Miguel. "If he is wrong, then it will soon appear so, and all the better for your church, I should think."

"Oh, but husband, it is wrong even to listen to the views of a heretic," said Senhora Izabel. "Our church so teaches, and we ought to regard her laws. I tell you, Father Anselmo will *never* submit to it. He will make great trouble."

"And I tell you that *I*, and not Father

Anselmo, am master here!" declared Senhor Miguel, and now his wrath was pretty well awakened.

"My dear, listen to me," pleaded Senhora Izabel. "If we anger Father Anselmo he will not beseech the Gracious Lady* in our behalf, then what will become of us, of our home, of our children, of ourselves, and even of your crops?"

The Senhor looked somewhat staggered by this. Like all of his race he was superstitious, and, though he was neither ardent nor very faithful in his devotion to the church, yet he believed to some degree in the power of the priests, and Father Anselmo's insinuations always affected him unpleasantly;—Still, he was a liberal man. He liked to deal justly with all men. He could not see why the missionary could not be given the opportunity to state his religious views as well as Father Anselmo. Further, he determined that he should do it; for Senhor Miguel was in something of a stubborn mood just then. But he would do all he could to pacify Senhora Izabel. She must not be made to suffer. So he told her that

* The Virgin Mary, worshipped by all Catholics as the supreme saint, and believed to be able to bestow either good or evil.

he would arrange for the services, that the missionary *must* be allowed to speak, in the cause of justice, if for no other reason. At the same time he assured her that he would settle with the Father Anselmo, and in such a way that no blame would fall upon her. This settlement he secretly resolved should be in the form of a rather large donation to Father Anselmo's work.

Senhora Izabel was for the time pacified, though not satisfied. She knew Father Anselmo far better than her husband did. She doubted even Senhor Miguel's ability to adjust matters with him satisfactorily. She had her doubts and her fears. But she must obey her husband. She must summon the women to the services. However, she made an inward resolve: neither herself nor the Dona Izilda would attend the meeting. Father Anselmo should not have that to charge against her. Indeed, she feared the priest far more than she dared express, and would not have done anything to anger him. In some respects her fear of him was even stronger than her love for the church. Just what his power could be she had more than one time been made to feel.

The services were held in front of the residence, and just as the sun was within a half-

hour or so of its setting, the missionary stood upon the steps. Before him was gathered his congregation, a hundred or more. Some were standing, others were seated upon blocks they had brought, or small strips of plank placed across brick supports. Many were prostrate upon the grass. One thing was especially worthy to be noticed; they were, with but one or two exceptions, earnestly attentive. Some were leaning considerably forward in their eagerness. There were even those that had their cheeks resting upon uplifted palms, their eyes burning with an intense fire as they were riveted upon the missionary's face. The sight of these alone would have caused the Father Anselmo, could he have seen them, to break up the meeting then and there, and at any cost. It was a good thing, especially for the soul's welfare of those intensely earnest ones, that he did not see them.

The missionary's text was from those immortal words of Jesus, the Saviour of men, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

How eagerly they hung upon every word! how intently they regarded him as he fearlessly pictured the sin and folly of trying to reach heaven by any other way save through the

blood-washed one of "Jesus, the Lamb for sinners slain!"

Oh, what a merciful, loving, tender Saviour this was! and he had offered himself a sacrifice for us, had given himself to die that we might live. And, oh, *how* he wanted men to come to him, not through their own merits, not through any works that they did, not by offerings nor by penances, but simply through trust, through *faith* in the blood that had been shed for them, the blood of a Saviour.

Sobs came from more than one throat, while the falling tears dimmed many eyes. Miss Mary recognized the effect the missionary's sermon had made, and a song of thanksgiving went up from her heart. Oh, that the light might dawn more fully yet for many of these groping souls!

True to her resolve, the Senhora Izabel was not present at the services; neither did she permit the Dona Izilda to attend, though the latter pleaded so earnestly to be allowed the privilege. But the Senhor was there. He sat upon the steps beside the missionary, his hat removed, his face expressing the deepest and most respectful attention.

Miss Mary could see—for she was watching him closely—that at more than one point he

showed conviction. The missionary certainly expressed himself clearly. How could any one fail to understand? An incident happened at the close of the services that startled Miss Mary. At the same time it gave her a thrill at her heart, a thrill that was unmistakable. It was of sudden joy, of gladness, the sweet rush of which was like the chiming of bells. As she turned from the steps the noise of a closing window attracted her attention. It was a somewhat muffled sound, broken by a harsher one, as though the person closing the window had desired to do so with as little noise as possible, but had been frustrated by the window catching and proving stubborn for a moment or so.

The louder sound breaking upon her ear, Miss Mary glanced up quickly. She had plenty of time to see Izilda's face at the window. It was not quite dark as yet, though nearly so. However, objects at no great distance could be seen distinctly. There assuredly was Izilda at the window. Miss Mary saw her plainly, and she saw Miss Mary.

A little later, as Miss Mary had occasion to cross the hall on the way from one room to another, some one came to her quickly from out a corner—some one who had evidently been on the watch for her—while her hand was

eagerly clasped. In a moment she knew it was Izilda, and her heart waited for the question that she felt was coming.

“O Miss Mary, did the missionary really mean what he said? Are we not to make offerings, or to pray to saints, or to do penances when we have committed sin, but instead are to come straight to this dear, loving, forgiving Saviour of whom he told us?”

“Yes, my child, he meant it,” said Miss Mary, softly, and tenderly stroking her hand as she spoke. “It is true. ‘There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved’ except that of Jesus, the Christ, the Redeemer of the world.”

“Oh, it is so beautiful! *so* beautiful!” said Izilda again, more to herself than to Miss Mary.

“Yes, my child, it *is* beautiful; the most beautiful story to which the world has ever listened.”

“How I wish that I could hear it again!”

Izilda seemed still to be talking to herself, though her eyes were raised to Miss Mary’s. But doubtless they saw nothing, as they were swimming in tears.

“I echo that wish, my dear, with all my heart.” Miss Mary was about to say more, but suddenly

she seemed to recollect herself, and stopped. She recalled that she was the honored guest of a house wherein the utterance of such expressions on her part would be regarded not only as heresies, but as the grossest ingratitude. So she said no more on this line, but only stood stroking Izilda's hand, her hair, and soothing her with gentle, comforting words.

Another surprise awaited Miss Mary that evening, a greater surprise even than this one in connection with Izilda had been. While the Senhora Izabel was seeing to some household affairs, and the children and young girls were in the verandah waiting for the festivities to begin, the Senhor had Miss Mary for a quiet talk in a corner.

He was troubled, he told her. It was about Izilda. She ought to be at school. He knew it, he realized it more and more each day. In truth, she ought to have been there two or three years before. But her mother seemed so unwilling to give her up; at least, to go a long distance. He, too, had felt reluctant to part with her, for she was the sunshine, the comfort of the house. So he had let his and his wife's feelings stand in the child's light. But it must be so no longer. Izilda must go to school. Upon this he was resolved.

“I have heard your school at Piracicaba spoken of in the highest terms,” he continued. “Miss Watson, who is at the head of it, is said to be the finest educator of girls in this whole section of Brazil. Time and again my attention has been called to the number of our best men who entrust their daughters to her charge. Their praise of the school is unstinted. I know they would not speak as they do if they did not believe it to be just as they represent.”

“We feel that we have a first-class school in every respect,” said Miss Mary, proudly. “We use every endeavor to make it so. I am indeed glad, Senhor Miguel, that your friends have been so good as to speak of our school with such hearty approval.”

“I am sure it is no more than it deserves, Miss Mary,” he replied; then continued, after a pause, “I must tell you, without further hesitation, that it is my thought to send Izilda to your school.”

Miss Mary almost started out of her chair. Could this be true that she heard?

“I have been thinking of it for some months,” he continued, “ever since I had that talk with the Senhor Moraes. My own mind is made up. The only trouble will be with her mother.”

Miss Mary looked the question she did not speak. In her heart she knew what the answer would be.

The Senhor continued :

“It is with reference to my wife’s objection to sending her to a Protestant school. You understand me, Miss Mary, and know how these things are regarded in my—my wife’s church.”

“I understand,” said Miss Mary, feelingly. “It is a rather delicate, nay, trying position, especially with the priests offering such strong opposition.”

“Yes, it is all through the priests,” he replied, a little irritably. “I do not see how they have the right to meddle in such matters. A man ought to be privileged to send his own children where he pleases. Tell me, Miss Mary,” he continued, after a pause, and looking at her somewhat hesitantly, “is it true that you force children attending these schools to become Protestants?”

“Nothing could be further from our desire and intention,” declared Miss Mary, quickly. “We never, under any circumstances, compel a child to renounce its religious faith. At the same time,” she continued, frankly, and looking fearlessly at Senhor Miguel, “we endeavor to give them what we feel and believe to be the

true Christian instruction. This done, we leave it to the child either to accept or to reject."

"That seems fair enough," replied Senhor Miguel. "Izilda is old enough now to have penetration for herself, to know how to make choice of what is best for her. I feel sure I can trust her along this line. She will make no mistake. She has mind as well as heart, though the former *has* been so carelessly neglected in the matter of education. If only I could get my wife to see it in this way. But she cannot. She is so fearful of what will happen; so alarmed, too, as to what the priests will do and say should she give her consent. But I will talk with her once more, Miss Mary, and will communicate with you again upon this subject ere you leave. I do hope she *can* be brought to see it as I do," and unconsciously he gave expression to a sigh.

Miss Mary echoed the sigh. She could not help it. She felt, without waiting to put it to a further test, just what the Senhora Izabel's decision would be in the matter. Unless some decided change came, she would never consent to her daughter's going to a Protestant school.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FESTA OF ST. JOHN.

IN due time the festival came off, and was all the young people could desire. The Festa (or Feast) of St. John, which occurs on June 24, is the greatest of all the year in Brazil. Especially was this true during the existence there of slavery. Then it was regarded quite as Christmas is in our own country. It is still celebrated with considerable festivity, and is eagerly looked forward to, particularly by the children and the laborers on the *fazendas*. The one here alluded to bade fair to prove quite as interesting as any that had preceded it.

Very early in the evening wood had been placed for bonfires. Just as soon as it grew dark these were lighted, casting a weird brilliancy over the scene.

Inez clapped her hands as the flames shot up.

“Now we shall have plenty of light by which to see everything!” she cried. “I love the light,” she continued confidentially to Emilia, who was standing near “and I don’t like the dark one bit.”

"I reckon not," returned Emilia, "no one does, my dear; at least, not so much as they do the light," she added, as though correcting herself.

"Why, is there *any one* who likes the dark a single bit?" asked Inez, in surprise.

"Yes," replied Emilia, "there are those who really like the dark, for it shuts out all else, and they can be with themselves and think. The dark is just the thing when you want to be alone."

"Do *you* like the dark?" queried Inez, looking at her closely.

Emilia hesitated a moment. Then she replied: "I do not mind it; but once I was greatly afraid of the dark."

"Why are you not afraid of it now?"

"Because I know there is nothing there that could hurt me, and because," she continued, "I feel there is one with me who can keep me from all harm. God is with me," she concluded, after a moment or so of hesitation.

"Why, I never heard of *that!*" exclaimed Inez, evidently in great astonishment. "I thought God was in heaven."

"So he is, but he can be here with us on the earth, too, if only we'll ask him."

“Were you *ever* afraid of the dark?” queried Inez, again.

“Yes, once, and not so long ago. But that was before I knew I could have God with me.”

“What did you do when you had to go into the dark alone?”

Emilia’s face flushed, and she looked evidently confused.

“What *did* you do then?” persisted Inez.

“I made a little cross of sticks which I took with me,” said Emilia, finally, after much hesitation.

“Well, I should think *that* was right. That is just what I would do, only I don’t want to go in the dark even with the cross, although the Father Anselmo does say that if we will kiss it and call on the Virgin it will take all the evil away.”

“Oh, but that is wrong!” declared Emilia, impulsively, and for the moment quite forgetting Miss Mary’s warning not to abuse the hospitality shown her by boldly declaring her Protestant faith in this Catholic house.

“I used to do that myself. But it is all wrong, oh, very wrong, indeed! It is not the cross nor the Virgin, but only God, who can keep evil away.”

She would, probably, have said more, but at this moment a loud burst of music was heard, and Inez sprang toward the steps of the verandah, crying:

“They’re coming! They’re coming!”

Yes, the procession was coming. The music told this plainly, though it was not the pleasantest music in the world. It had plenty of sound, but not so much harmony. However, it did its best to do honor to the occasion.

At the head of the procession walked two men who carried a tall stout pole. When a certain point between the bonfires had been reached they halted, and began to secure the pole in a hole that had been dug for the purpose. At the top of the pole there was a banner, and on the banner a figure of St. John.

While they were placing the staff in the hole, others in the procession advanced and threw into the opening handfuls of coffee-grains, beans and rice. Even an egg or two was put in so as to bring good luck to the hens. Finally the pole was securely planted amid a loud burst of gay *vivas* (hurrahs) from the crowd. Following the *vivas* came a volley of sky-rockets.

The children clapped their hands and added their cries of approval to the general noise.

“I wish they would hurry and do that

again!" said Maneco. "That's the best part of it."

"So it is," joined in Inez. "I like to see the rockets go charging upward like snakes on fire. I do wish papa had let us have some of our own."

"But these are for my little girls as well as for any one," spoke the Senhor, who overheard the remark, and who had paid the bill for all the fire-works, a very lavish one, by the way.

"But, papa, we want to send them off ourselves. We want to touch off the fiery snakes with our own hands."

"But my little girls are not big enough to be trusted with that yet. There is danger in the fiery snakes for those who do not just understand them. One of my little girls might get her hair or her face burned, or even her eye injured. So, just content yourself, my dear, with looking at them from this distance. Believe me, it is much safer."

Inez seemed on the point of contesting this declaration. A little pucker appeared between her eyes and she opened her lips quickly. But just then a burst of Roman candles caused her to forget what she was going to say, and to scream out instead with delight.

The Roman candles were followed by other

sky rockets, then by Roman candles again, and finally by blazing wheels that, fastened to poles, fairly spun around, casting showers of glowing sparks. The last volley of fire-works consisted of pieces that exploded after they had reached some distance in the air, looking, as they did so, like blazing bouquets of flowers.

The little girls fairly danced with delight. *Could* anything be more beautiful or grand?

Soon the real dance began. This was around the pole that had the figure of St. John. But it was not a very animated dance. On the other hand, it was rather sedate and slow. This was, doubtless, due in part to the somewhat dismal music. And no wonder that it was dismal music, for it was made principally on an instrument known as the *tambour*. This consisted of a piece of skin stretched over a small barrel and beaten with sticks, like a drum. But for the two or three stringed instruments that accompanied it and partly drowned its noise, it would have been horrid indeed.

The negro who was beating this drum seemed never to tire. His elbows stuck out and cut up and down through the air like the wings of some great bird. The fire-light fell full upon his face, and all who looked could see that great beads of perspiration were standing out upon it.

“I should think he would get tired and would let some one else take his place,” said Miss Mary. “He seems overcome with exhaustion now.”

“But he will not give up until he is really so,” replied Senhor Miguel, “for that is considered the great post of honor at the *festa*, and the louder and longer one can beat in doing honor to the Saint, just in like proportion will blessings and honors be showered upon him.”

“I do wish they would dance like they meant something,” cried Inez. “I never saw such a poky way of doing it. Why don’t they get about like this?” and she began skipping back and forth, in quite an animated manner, across a portion of the verandah.

“But, my daughter,” said her mother, as soon as she could gain her ear, “you must remember that this is a religious festival, and not one solely for pleasure.”

“Well, but a dance is a dance!” declared Miss Inez, pertly, “and I do not see why they can’t go at it in the right way.”

“I guess they know what they are about,” said Maneco, more to have a point of difference with Inez than from anything else. “I should think, too,” she continued, “that you would heed our mother when she speaks to you.”

“You do it so often yourself,” returned Inez, and with an ugly frown gathering on her forehead.

“Little girls mustn’t quarrel,” declared their Sister Izilda, at this point, placing a restraining hand upon the shoulder of each, “especially on this feast day of the good St. John, who wants everybody to be happy and to follow the command to ‘love one another.’”

“If you don’t mind he’ll cut off your candy-nuts,” cried Maneco, warningly, and with a mocking smile. “They say he can do anything he wants to, especially if the Virgin helps him.”

A cold thrill ran through Miss Mary’s heart as she heard these words. Oh, the darkness and ignorance and superstition in the minds of those the priests controlled! Even this child, almost a baby in years, had absorbed a portion of it! How her heart ached! How she longed then and there to tell the sweet story of the Babe of Bethlehem! of the Father who sent him, to whom, and to whom alone, we are to go for all the good we need, as well as for the power of overcoming evil. But the time was not yet, though, perhaps, it would come. How fervently she prayed that it might!

It was a weird scene presented by the fire-

light, now that the blaze of fire-works was no longer cast upon it. There were women and children, as well as men. Some of the women had babies in their arms, while smaller children were clinging to their dresses. It did look as though these ought to have been asleep, for it was now late in the evening—but what child is there in Brazil who can sleep on St. John's Eve? that most delightful time of all the year!

Many of the women and some of the children had little banners and crucifixes made of wood and stone. These they kissed every now and then, saluting the picture of the Saint. Doubtless they were beseeching him to bring them all the good luck he could.

As soon as any of the dancers would grow exhausted and drop out, others would take their place. Thus the circle was kept constantly moving back and forth about the pole. They did not sway their bodies a great deal, but seemed more to move them up and down. Every now and then, above the noise of the music, could be heard rather mournful chants and sometimes prayers. Nearly always the latter were for the purpose of beseeching the Saint for some blessing.

After two or three hours spent in these ceremonies the people were invited to a feast which

the Senhor had provided and which was spread in a vacant house near by. There they remained, drinking and eating and singing, until almost morning.

After looking in for a while upon the feast, Miss Mary, the two little girls, and the Senhor's family had gone to bed, but not to sleep—especially the older ones—for some time at least. How could they with the continual noise ringing in their ears?

In the morning there was another ceremony. This occurred just at daybreak, and consisted of the taking of an image of St. John, borrowed from the chapel, for a bath in the creek. This service was supposed to be looked upon with great favor by the Saint. But, alas! on this occasion a disaster resulted, for those who had the image in charge carelessly let it drop, and it was broken in several pieces. At once there was a chorus of groans from the men, with wails from the women. What *was* to happen to them now? What were all those ceremonies with such a calamity following close upon them? They had broken the image of the patron Saint,* and for that year, at least, he would not send them favors.

*In Catholic countries St. John is looked upon as the patron Saint of farmers and working-people.

When the Senhora Izabel heard of the disaster she was moved first to anger, then to tears; anger toward those who had been so careless as to drop the Saint and break him, and tears because of the woe the catastrophe might bring. Then her woman's wit suggested a way out of the difficulty.

"We will all contribute and buy a new image!" she declared, "a fine, bright, new image, ever so many times better than the old. And we will deck it out as grandly as we can. Surely the Saint will be appeased then."

"But it won't be like the one that had all the ceremonies done over it and the dancing," suggested Inez. "I don't think the Saint would want to do anything unless a fuss was first made over him. I'm sure he wouldn't. I know I wouldn't in his place."

Instead of looking shocked at these words, as Miss Mary certainly did, the Senhora Izabel merely replied: "Yes, that's so. I don't guess he would. So, when the new image comes we must have some ceremonies especially to please him."

"I don't guess it mattered much about the image getting broken!" declared Maneco. "It was an awfully old one, and it had seen a hard time, for I heard Manuel say it was the same

one they had set out in the coffee-fields two or three times when the crops seemed bad, so that he might bless 'em and make 'em do better. I guess it was the sun that peeled of his nose, and the winds that took off a piece of his ear."

"Maneco!" called her mother, sharply, "remember you are speaking of our blessed Saint." She certainly looked shocked now.

"Oh, well, but, mamma, he is all broken up now, and so there is no more of him."

"But the new image is coming," suggested Inez.

"Well, then I'll wait till the new image comes. That will be worth talking about. Mamma, I have a piece of lace that I will give you for his neck. There! Inez, quit pinching me, or I'll box your ears. I guess I can say what I please, even if this dear Miss Mary *is* present."

"Maneco!" said her mother, sharply, at this point. "I am astonished at your lightness. When will you learn the proper reverence? I see that I shall have to tell the Father Anselmo about it. What *will* he say?"

"I don't care what the Father Anselmo says," declared Maneco; but she took care not to let her mother hear her. There were some points

with regard to which she could not go too far, even with her mother, and this was one of them. So she said these words almost under her breath, though she was wicked enough to turn her face with a mocking smile just where Inez could see it.

Inez was about to call her mother's attention to it, and also to repeat Maneco's words, when Izilda, seeing the movement, and fully understanding it, hastily changed the subject.

That night ere retiring, Senhor Miguel had managed to speak to Miss Mary again with reference to sending Izilda to school at Piracicaba. He had talked with his wife and placed the matter before her. At first, as he had feared, she was strongly opposed; but when she heard of Miss Mary's declaration that they did not force the children to renounce their Catholic faith, she had been more inclined, and said she would consult with Father Anselmo.

Miss Mary's heart sank. She knew very well what would be the result of that consultation. But she managed to say, as gracefully as she could:

"I hope your wife will finally consent, Senhor Miguel. We should like to have Izilda in our

school. I know she would prove a pupil of whom we would be proud."

"She has a fine mind," declared the Senhor, with parental pride. "She has shown an aptness in everything undertaken so far. It is the source of deep pain to me that her education has been so neglected in many respects. I hope soon to make up to her for this omission."

"Have you ever spoken to the Dona Izilda herself with reference to attending our school?" asked Miss Mary.

"Oh, yes."

"And how did she feel about it?"

"Oh, she was delighted with the idea. I think she would be willing to go back with you to-morrow, if only it was the right time to enter. I know she will do all she can to persuade her mother to send her."

"I am glad to hear, Senhor Miguel, that Izilda herself is inclined to come. It will have much to do with making her satisfied after she is there. Of course, Senhor Miguel," she continued, "many things about the school are quite different from those to which the young girls have been used in their own homes. For one thing, we find it to the best interests of all to maintain a rather strict discipline. Some of

the girls chafe under this, and often persuade their parents to remove them for this cause alone. It comes hard to them to submit to the positive rule of school-life after the indulgence shown them at home."

"I feel assured, Miss Mary, that you would find no trouble with Izilda in this respect," said the Senhor, confidently.

"Yes, I feel so too," replied Miss Mary. "Izilda is a fine girl, one of whom any father and mother might be proud."

The Senhor bowed his thanks and left Miss Mary to her musings. They were of Izilda. The young girl had found a warm place in her heart. There was a tenderness and a wistfulness, too, whenever she thought of her. Especially had these feelings grown well defined since the touching little encounter she had had with her that very night in the hall. Much had then and there been revealed to Miss Mary. A part of this had made her glad, indeed, but another part had filled her with sadness.

St. John's Eve had brought many things to many people: to Senhor Miguel a great outlay of money, to the revelers joys and heartaches, according as they felt they deserved good or evil from the Saint; an uneasy foreboding following the breaking of the image, to Senhora

Izabel; while to the twins it brought merry-making and the wicked desire to say all the impertinent things they could. But to Miss Mary it brought something far different than it brought to any one else. It brought the glimpse into a young girl's heart that had just awakened to the longing for a higher, better, and nobler life, the life spiritual. How was it to end? Miss Mary wondered. Would the germ perish in the cold and darkness, or would the sunshine of help, of encouragement, of knowledge be given it? In all her life long Izilda never had a more fervent prayer than was offered for her at that moment.

CHAPTER V.

A GLAD SCENE AND A SAD ONE.

JANITA and Emilia were nearly wild with delight. It had been decreed that they were to remain yet another day. The good Senhor himself had been the cause of it. He said they just must not go until the little girls had had an outing in the woods. Though the air was crisp and cool, yet by wrapping up well they would enjoy it. Among other things, there were some beautiful falls to see.

Old Manuel was to attend them, and all were to go on horseback. They waited until the sun was well up, so as to have his genial warmth. Then they started. Such a gay sight as they presented! I said horseback, but I meant mule-back of course, for whoever saw many horses in the rural districts of Brazil, especially in use on the *fazendas*?

Miss Mary and Izilda rode away first; next came Joachima with Emilia, then Janita and Paulo, one of the boys from a neighboring *fazenda*, a gay, manly little fellow. Next them were the twins, attended by Manuel. Each had a mule, except the twins. They had one between

them. It would have been such a novel sight to you if you could have seen how they were riding. You would have been obliged to laugh, too, for they did look so funny! Each was in a basket slung on either side of the mule. As they were rather deep baskets, only the heads and shoulders of the little girls were visible. As the mule plodded along they would bob up and down. Sometimes, when he made a rough step over the stones and nearly stumbled, they looked exactly as though they would tumble out of the baskets. But there was really no danger, as the baskets were rather deep, as I have said, and they knew how to hold on.

There was something else in the baskets besides the little girls. Those wonderful rag-dolls were there; those dolls for which they had chased their Sister Izilda upstairs. Poor Silverita! she had been utterly discarded when the glowing charms of new favorites had been revealed. At that very moment she was tossed away under one of the settees, while the poodle, Dolo, was serenely gnawing the cotton from one of her legs. She would be a ragged doll as well as a rag-doll in an hour's time. Alas! it was a final farewell to poor Silverita.

One of the new dolls was such a delightful boy doll. His name was Eduardo. The little

girls had clamored for a doll wedding as soon as his charms had dawned upon them, and those of the lovely Sinhàha. Izilda had assured them that it should be just as soon as she could arrange for the ceremony. When they heard that they were going to the woods for a frolic they declared that *that* would be the very time, and Izilda had said, "Yes; it would." So all the arrangements had been perfected, and that very day, under the swaying boughs and with the love songs of the birds in their ears, the manly Eduardo and the lovely Sinhàha would be joined together "for better or for worse." That it would be very decidedly for the "worse," unless Inez and Maneco learned to conduct their household affairs more properly, Izilda prophesied in no uncertain tones. But the twins treated this prophecy with contempt. They were very model mothers, indeed, in their own estimation. Hence, if Eduardo and Sinhàha but followed their teachings, they would "live in peace ever afterwards." Izilda was too wise to contest this point. So there the matter was dropped, each mother going forth to the nuptial ceremony proudly and complacently bearing her child.

They had such a capital lunch with them. The Senhora Izabel had herself fixed it up.

There was chicken, nice ribs of beef, fried potatoes, a hash mixed with flour and fried like cakes, cheese, crackers, biscuits, and fruit.

It took them about an hour and a half to get to the place where they were going. By that time the sun was quite warm, so they hailed with delight the shade of the trees, though there was a chilly suggestiveness in the air as soon as they passed out of the bright sunlight. But they had on thick clothing and didn't mind it.

There was such a pretty brook where they dismounted. It fairly sang as it went dancing on its way. Just above they could hear the soft rush and roar of the falls. They rested a little while, then went to see them. It was rather a rough way, but they had much fun clambering along it: They did not grow tired, for there were so many beautiful ferns and late wild flowers growing in rich profusion around them. The butterflies, too, were large and brilliant. All these helped to charm the way.

Only one unpleasant thing happened. Inez's foot slipped on a stone and she fell and bumped her head. She was disposed to cry a good deal and to pout and to look ugly. But Izilda came to the rescue by telling her that this was not at all a promising appearance for a mother who

hoped soon to figure at the marriage of her favorite son. So she dried her eyes, and was soon smiling again as brightly as any of them.

Paulo gallantly assisted the ladies of the party, especially Joachima, upon whom his brightest smiles were bestowed. He picked flowers for them, too, and even captured butterflies to present to the lady of his heart, until Miss Mary told him it was cruel to crush the tender creatures so in his hands, or to pinch them between his fingers. He seemed to have a kind heart under his somewhat rough boyish exterior, and Miss Mary was quite gratified to note that he heeded the admonition.

The falls were not steep, but they were beautiful and picturesque, and those who had never seen them before felt fully repaid for coming. Indeed, Janita and Emilia were quite expressive in their appreciation. They clapped their hands with delight, and said how they did wish they had a picture of them! Thereupon Izilda, who had quite a gift of this kind, produced pencil and paper, making a sketch of them, which she promised the two little girls she would paint, to be hung in the parlor of the school at Piracicaba.

They left the falls and strolled about the woods for an hour or more, hunting late wild

fruits and nuts, of which they found a variety. Then they went back to where they had left old Manuel and the mules, and began preparations to partake of their lunch. By this time they were quite hungry, and so it did not take long for the Senora Izabel's many good things to quite vanish away.

"Why, we shall not have any to eat going back!" cried Inez, in dismay, as she noted the last biscuit and slice of beef rapidly disappearing down old Manuel's capacious throat.

"I shouldn't think we'd want any after all we've stored away now," replied her sister Izilda. "Besides, what kind of state of mind is this anyhow, for a mother who is expecting soon to attend the wedding of her favorite son? Why, I should think that the thought of such common-place things as beef and biscuit and hash-cakes wouldn't for a moment enter her head!"

"Oh, the doll wedding!" cried Inez, jumping up and clapping her hands. "When *is* it to be?"

"Now, shortly," returned Izilda; "just as soon as we've had time to recover from this huge meal we have eaten."

In due time the wedding came off, and it was all that the fondest mother could desire.

Paulo was the *padre* (priest) and he acted the part beautifully.

Indeed, so feeling was he, and so touching his remarks, that both mothers placed their handkerchiefs to their eyes two or three times as though quite overcome.

Eduardo stood up as gracefully as his very stiff legs would allow. He did not fall over but once, and that was at the very point where he was asked if he would take the lovely Sinhãha to be his bride, "to love, honor and cherish."

"Inez declared that he, of course, intended to say yes; that he was, in fact, about to give a nod of his head when he lost his balance and came tumbling over in that way. He meant only to be emphatic, and not so impolite as to measure his length in that undignified manner at the feet of his intended wife. He was propped up again and the ceremony proceeded.

Miss Mary gave the bride away. In short, the bride looked as though she were about to give herself away, for, owing to a very tight pressure about her shoulders at that moment, on the part of her very solicitous mother, and some rather careless stitching—this on the part of Izilda—the cotton began at this moment to burst forth from a rip in her neck!

But despite these mishaps the ceremony proceeded, the *padre* keeping as grave a countenance as he could, and soon the words were spoken that gave the gentle Sinhàha into the keeping of the manly Eduardo "so long as they both should live."

Then the bride and groom were made to salute each other, while all the wedding guests, in turn, bestowed a kiss upon each, and offered their congratulations to the two proud mothers, who, for the moment, seemed quite overcome.

"It is such a trying and 'sponsible thing to see your children get married," Maneco remarked, in confidence to Miss Mary.

"It is so, dear child," she returned, with a smile, "very responsible, indeed. My sympathies always go out to parents, especially to mothers of daughters," and Miss Mary bent a very solicitous look upon Sinhàha, now Mrs. Eduardo.

All behaved beautifully on this occasion except the *padre*. It is true he went through the ceremony with all the grace and gravity that could be desired. But there his lovely behavior ended, for when he was called upon to kiss the bride, as proposed by Janita, he absolutely refused so to do. He declared that

he preferred something *live*, looking significantly at Joachima as he spoke.

Both Inez and Maneco turned on him, and, with many frowns, asserted that he was just the naughtiest kind of a boy, even if he had only a few moments before performed the ceremony that united their two darlings.

But the *padre* had vanished and the boy remained. So there was no winning Paulo to the course desired. He was "as stubborn as old Pedro," the mule, as Inez ungraciously declared.

He only looked at her with a little mocking smile as she paid him this compliment of comparing him to old Pedro; then made her a sweeping bow, in which the injured Sinhàha was included. He thought this quite concession enough.

As they were going back they met a troop of pack-mules. The leader had a bell on its neck that tinkled loudly as it walked.

"That is the godmother," said Joachima to Miss Mary.

"Why, what a funny name to call a mule!"

"Oh, it is called that because it leads the others. All the mules in the pack follow the godmother."

As they came in front of the mules, old

Manuel brandished his arms to make the god-mother turn out of the way and let them go by. This she at once proceeded to do.

"That was a very sensible mule," remarked Miss Mary.

"Oh, they are all that way," returned Joachima. "They know exactly what you mean. Even if you did not raise your arms, they would turn out to let you pass. Papa has ever so many knowing ones on the *fazenda*. Old Manuel is riding one now that acts as the god-mother when they go with packs of goods. She got so once that she wouldn't move till they put the bells on her. She seemed to think she wasn't fixed to start until she did get them. But old Manuel soon got her out of that."

"I guess she was like some ladies, Joachima," said Miss Mary, "who won't go anywhere till they get all their finery on."

"Yes'm, I guess so," returned Joachima. "But that is very silly."

"Yes, my child, it is; yet many women who think themselves quite sensible do it."

When they arrived at home sad news awaited them. There was to be a funeral in the chapel that afternoon. The little girl of one of the head laborers on a neighboring *fazenda* had died the preceding day, and was to be buried

at the time mentioned. To show the proper respect as well as sympathy for the parents, Senhora Izabel said they must go to the funeral.

"I do not like to go to funerals!" declared Maneco. "They are so sad and everybody looks so solemn. I do wish there wasn't ever one to go to."

"I dare say everybody wishes that," said Izilda, "for if there was no death in the world all would be glad. But there must be sickness and death and sorrow, and our hearts are not true, tender hearts if they do not show their sympathy for those who are in grief. So we must go to this funeral, Maneco, for the poor mother is nearly distracted, I know."

"We had a death at the college not long ago," said Emilia, "that was not a sad death at all. Indeed, it was such a beautiful death, and little Néne seemed so glad and happy to go, and talked so joyously about soon being with Jesus, that we couldn't feel sad at all when we knew she was there."

"Oh, I would be afraid to die!" said Inez, with a shudder. "I can't bear the thought of going down into the dark ground."

"Oh, that is only the body!" replied Emilia, "the part that after death does not know any-



A ROMAN PROCESSION.

thing that is done to it and with it. It is only the soul that lives, only the soul that knows and thinks. That, if it has been a good soul, goes to live with God and with Jesus in heaven."

"And if it has been a bad soul it goes to purgatory," said Maneco. "I know all about it, I heard the Father Anselmo telling it. But the soul doesn't have to stay in purgatory always," she continued. "If the family is rich enough they can pay the priests to pray it out."

"What do *you* know about such things?" asked her mother, quickly.

"Oh, mamma, I know a good deal; not only what I heard Father Anselmo say, but I know about Pedro. His people had to pay a great deal of money before the priests said his soul was out of purgatory and at rest."

Her mother frowned, and it was evident she wanted to say something more on the subject, but did not. It was doubtless owing to the guests who were present. Instead, she remarked:

"Inez, Maneco, when you go to the funeral this evening you must take care to behave, and not to make any remarks. Izilda, my dear, I want you to see that they do not quite dis-

grace us. I cannot go myself. I am sorry, but there is something I must do. If you get the chance, tell the poor Senhora Silvio how truly distressed I am for her."

"Yes, mother," replied Izilda.

"And, Izilda," added Senhora Izabel again, as though by way of extra caution, "*do* keep your eye on those children. They will need it."

"That I will, mother dear," assured Izilda.

It was, indeed, a distressing funeral. The poor mother was in such frantic grief. She had put on her oldest clothes, and would not even brush her hair. They had to hold her with force to keep her from prostrating herself upon the coffin. She wrung her hands, tore at her clothes, and tried in every way to release herself.

The coffin was of white, and it was borne to its place in the chapel by young girls. They had a number of ribbon bows about them, with broad sashes, and on their heads wreathes of flowers.

The little girl who was dead was dressed in her prettiest clothes. Her dress was blue, and she had on a red sash with the ends tied in front. She had bows of the same color at her throat and wrists, and there were artificial flowers in her hands and on her head.

"Oh, I think she would look so much prettier

in white; do not you?" Janita asked of Emilia, after they had been to take a look at the dead child's face.

"Yes, but I suppose the poor mother desired her to have those gay colors, to look as fine as she could. Poor, dear woman," added Emilia, with a sigh of the deepest pity. "I do wish she knew better."

"So do I!" said Janita.

The priest came in with his vestments on, spoke some words, chanted others, burned incense, then, after sprinkling holy water upon the coffin and upon those assembled, told them to take the body away for burial.

"Oh, why did he not speak some comforting words to the poor mother, as our good Mr. Raynor did when little Néne died!" exclaimed Janita.

"It is not their way, you know," returned Emilia.

"But it does seem *too* bad, really shocking to do things in that cold way and with such haste, and not to say a single word to the poor mother. Why, she is nearly distracted! I believe I will go and speak to her. I feel that I *must*;" and, without waiting for a word, either of sanction or of disapproval, impetuous Janita hurried away, and, just as they were bearing

the coffin out, threw her arms about the mother, while she said, "Oh, I am *so* sorry for you!"

The woman raised her head quickly, touched, thrilled by the kind words, as well as won by the warm young arms about her. Her cries ceased, her face lighted up as though a voice from that world to which her dear one had gone had spoken to her.

"The Virgin bless you!" she cried, catching Janita by the hands; "the Virgin bless you. Our dear lady have you in her keeping now and always."

"And Jesus, the dear Saviour, bless you and heal the wound!" returned Janita out of the fulness of her heart.

The woman looked at her in an uncomprehending way. Then a faint smile broke over her tear-wet face, while she said: "Mary's Son! But will he do anything save through the Holy Mother?"

"Yes; oh, yes!" declared Janita, impetuously; "he can and will. He sees our hearts, he knows our woes, he pities our distresses, Jesus, our only Redeemer, the world's Healer of sorrows."

The woman put her hand out again, this time in a helpless, groping way, toward Janita. She was about to say something further, but those

who were leading her hurried her away. One or two of the women had already given the young girl a frown, for at that moment they saw the priest's eye attracted toward them. Indeed, he had moved forward a step or so, as though to approach them, but seeing that they moved off, evidently changed his mind.

The plantation band met the procession at the door of the chapel, and, as it moved off in the direction of the cemetery, placed itself at its head, playing just the very noisiest music that it could. It was almost enough to deafen those who were to hear it, one of whom was the poor mother.

"They are doing that to tell the mother they are sorry for her, and to cheer her up," volunteered Maneco.

"Well, I should think it would do anything else than cheer her," said Janita. "Why, it is enough to drive her wild. I do not see how she endures it."

"It certainly is distressing," said Izilda; "and I do wish they hadn't done it, but it was out of the kindness of their hearts, I know."

The young people did not go to the cemetery—it was too far away—but returned from the chapel to the house.

Izilda was glad that she could make a some-

what good report to her mother with reference to the behavior of the twins. It is true that Inez came very near speaking out once or twice, and Maneco was caught making a face at an old lady who had a hideous bouquet of artificial flowers on her head, but beyond this there was no further demonstration, no decided outbreak. It really was a relief to Izilda, for she was always on pins when she had these turbulent twins in her charge.

Ere Miss Mary left the *fazenda* Izilda managed to have another talk with her. Her heart was full of the desire to attend the school at Piracicaba.

“I do wish you would beg my mother; beg her real hard, Miss Mary, for she is the only one who is not willing. Papa gave his consent long ago.”

“I *have* talked with your mother, Izilda, but I do not like to press her too far. She seems to prefer to leave it to the decision of Father Anselmo.”

“Oh! Father Anselmo!” exclaimed Izilda, while quite an unpleasant look passed over her face. “I know well what *he* will say. It will be that my mother must not think of sending me to a Prot——,” but just here Izilda stopped short, evidently much confused.

“I know what you would say, Izilda, dear. The priest objects to a Protestant school.”

“I can’t see why he does!” declared Izilda, and a little passionately; “I can’t see what right *he* has to control my father and mother so about a matter of this kind. Oh! I know I should be so happy with you there, dear Miss Mary,” she broke off, and a little piteously; “and I feel sure you would not teach me anything that was not right.”

“That we would not, Izilda,” declared Miss Mary, with deep feeling. “On the other hand,” she said, under her breath, “we would teach you, poor, precious, longing child, of the only ‘Way, the Truth, and the Life.’”

CHAPTER VI.

LIFE IN A MISSION SCHOOL.

“**T**HERE goes the rising bell, Emilia!” said Janita, a morning or so after their return from the *fazenda*. “Oh! *how* sleepy I am! I feel like I just *can't* get up,” and Janita yawned and rubbed her eyes.

“Why, what a lazy girl!” returned Emilia. “You were spoiled at the *fazenda*. You had too much sleep there.”

“But we had to get up almost as soon there as here,” declared Janita.

“No, not quite, my dear. Then, you know, we got some sleep in the afternoon.”

“What time is it, Emilia? Haven't I five minutes more for a nap?”

“No, Janita; not another minute. You have wasted three now. If you do not mind, you will not have time to dress. Get up now, and I will help you with some of your buttons.”

Thus admonished, Janita arose, though still lazily. She had barely completed dressing when the bell rang; indeed, she had to delay a moment to put a finishing touch or two, and

thus had to fairly scurry down the steps after Emilia. She was almost breathless when the dining-room was reached. There her hurried manner and flushed appearance attracted Miss Mary's attention.

"I fear my Janita turned over again this morning ere getting out of the bed," said Miss Mary, "and that she lay and rubbed her eyes even after she heard the bell, eh, Janita?"

"Yes, darling Miss Mary, I did. I am so ashamed. It seems I am very lazy these mornings; or, it may be," looking at her teacher with an arch smile, "that the bell rings sooner than usual. Isn't it this way, dear teacher?"

"No, Janita; the bell has not changed its time; indeed, it was a few minutes late this morning."

"Then, dear teacher, I suppose I must admit that I am lazy."

"A very bad admission, my Janita."

"Yes, Miss Mary, I know it is. I promise you it shall not continue," and Janita threw her arms around her teacher. "And please, Miss Mary," she entreated, "don't think that it was because I went to the *fazenda*, for I fear you'll never want to take me there again."

"Why, who said it was *that*?" and Miss Mary appeared to be very much surprised.

"Oh, Emilia. But I guess she was only teasing."

"Yes, I guess she was," returned Miss Mary, with a twinkle in her eye; "for remember, my Janita, if this really were so, there could be no more trips to the *fazenda*. Think what Miss Watson would say if she knew what had been the effects of that visit. Do you think she would want me to take you again?"

"No, dear teacher; I should think not," and Janita looked considerably abashed.

"Then my Janita must spur up, and show that she is even smarter than before she went."

"That I will, darling teacher," and Janita gave her a warm kiss.

The girls were fast assembling for the early morning lunch, and it was a very interesting sight to watch them. As she came into the room, each girl took from the table a small cup of coffee and a piece of bread. It did not take her long to drink and eat, for there was no formality either before or after. When a girl had finished she carried her cup to a side-table, where two girls stood washing and wiping the cups as fast as handed to them. After all had concluded, they formed into a double line for a brisk walk several times around the college building. This was called "taking the morn-

ing constitutional," and was looked forward to with keen relish by most of the girls. Some, however—they were the lazier ones—dreaded it, for they were required to walk erect and to keep step.

"It is just like playing soldiers," declared Janita to Emilia, who was her companion on this morning. "I don't feel lazy a bit after I get out here. I do wish we could have music like the sure-enough soldiers."

"Now, how would you like a *tambour*?" queried Emilia; "one like that the man was beating at the *festa*?"

"Oh, that would be horrid! I think, nay, I feel sure, I would rather go without any music at all. Why, I can hear those dismal sounds even now," and Janita made a movement to place her hands over her ears.

"Better keep your arms in place," cautioned Emilia, "or my soldier will get a mark or two this morning for disorder in marching."

"Thanks, Emilia. You didn't tell me a moment too soon. Miss Lida's eyes are just looking this way."

When they came back into the building, then began the stir of sweeping, dusting and arranging things. So carefully was the work divided that it took a very short time to put the entire

house in order, from the *sala* (parlor) and *escriptorio* (office) to the dormitories. Each girl had her part, and each part was gone through swiftly and deftly.

After the house-cleaning came the study hour. Some confined themselves to their books, while others practiced on the piano. When the study hour was over, those whose business it was for the day went to lay the breakfast table, while the younger ones of those who were left ran out to play, and the older ones to walk up and down the halls or out on the pavement in social chat.

The breakfast usually consisted of meat, beans, rice, bread, and fruit. In addition, each girl was sometimes served with a dish of Irish potatoes. As has been stated, this was considered somewhat of a luxury. Each head was bowed reverently as the grace was being said.

At the close of the meal all joined in reading the morning lesson, which was followed by prayer. Then the dishes were put away, the crumbs brushed up, and preparation made to go into the school-room.

The session lasted until 3 P. M., with half an hour between for recreation. This occurred at noon. Then each girl was served with coffee, bread, and generally with fruit.

At 3 P. M. came the "sewing hour," a very important one, by the way, in a mission school, for there are garments to be cut out and made; others, again, to be patched or turned, and many odds and ends of work that things may be put in a respectable shape. Besides, the girls were taught embroidery and other kinds of fancy work. Many of these pieces were sold, thus adding to the revenue of the school. The Brazilian women are fond of using the needle, and excel in lace-making and embroidery. Some of the specimens of their work often find their way to this country, and are exquisite.

There was but little restraint enforced during these "sewing hours," the girls being allowed to communicate with or talk to each other as much as they desired, provided it was not done in a noisy way. They could laugh as well as talk, which they often did.

On this particular afternoon they seemed to be quite merry. It was with reference to something that Carlota, one of the older girls, was telling.

In the primary department among the little boys there was one who had been there only a few weeks. His name was Pepito Harton. He was quite a bright little fellow, with cute ways, and was a great pet, especially among the older

girls. His father, who was a native of the United States, had married a Brazilian girl. At her death, when Pepito was four and a half years old, he had brought him to Miss Watson, asking her to keep and care for him until he, the father, was settled again. This she kindly consented to do. Pepito was too little to become a regular pupil, so was allowed much freedom.

When he came to school he was wearing trousers, for Brazilian mothers believe in placing their little boys in these almost as soon as they begin to walk. Sometimes they look like little old wizened monkeys, or, again, like stuffed toads. But Pepito was quite a manly little fellow and really looked quite well in his trousers. However, Miss Watson decided that it would be better if he wore dresses for a while longer. So he was put in dresses and made such a cute girl that the girls gave him many cunning nicknames. One of them was Mary Buttercup, Mary for Miss Mary and Buttercup because he was such a chubby little fellow, and, too, because his hair had a golden tint. Soon "Mary Buttercup" became the name by which he was generally known in the school when he had his dresses on. Sometimes, to please him, the teachers and older girls would put his trousers on

for a while. Then he was Pepito Harton, sometimes the Senhor Pepito Harton, when the girls wanted to give him a very big air, indeed.

Naturally poor Pepito became very much confused. Soon it grew to be quite a matter of perplexity as to whether he was Mary Buttercup or Pepito Harton.

It was about Pepito and this perplexity that Carlota was now telling the story.

“What do you think,” she said, “the poor little mite actually did the funniest thing yesterday he has done yet! I think it is time we stopped teasing him.”

“What was it he did?” asked one of the girls, who was getting impatient to hear.

“His father came to see him, and Miss Watson sent one of the girls to find him. He was in the school-room and had on one of his dresses, though just that morning he had worn his trousers for quite a while.”

“Pepito Harton,” said Olympia, “as soon as she saw him, ‘your father is here and wants to see you.’”

The little fellow raised himself up, threw back his head, and, fixing his eyes upon her in a perplexed sort of way, said:

“Pepito Harton isn’t here, but Mary Buttercup is!”

The girls laughed heartily. Then Emilia said :

“It is a shame we tease him so! I think we ought to stop it. But then,” she continued, “he’ll doubtless be wearing his trousers after a while for good, and so be ‘Mary Buttercup’ no longer. I heard Miss Mary say his father had requested it. I dare say Pepito will be glad enough then to give Mary Buttercup her last good-bye.”

Just at that moment Miss Mary’s voice was heard at the door :

“Come, Emilia! Come, Janita! It is your time to go visiting this evening. Get your hats and your shawls, and meet me in the *escriptorio* (office).”

It was always the custom after school in the afternoon for one of the teachers and two or more of the girls to go on a round of visits among the poorer classes. In this way much Bible work was done—seed sown that brought forth a precious harvest, now and then, even though it were “after many days.” But sometimes the harvest came without a long waiting. How rejoiced their hearts were then!

“First,” said Miss Mary, after they had gained the street, “we will go to the home of one of the members of our church, the Senhora

Rita. Perhaps she will let the little Antoinette come to school. She almost promised me the last time I was there."

The Senhora Rita lived some distance away, almost on the outskirts of the town. It was pleasant walking at first, for the pavements were nice and smooth. The houses, too, were attractive. They were directly upon the street, and were usually elevated several feet. The windows were very high, quite above the level of their heads as they walked along. If there was a flower-yard it was generally on one side with quite a high wall facing the street. Thus its beauties could not be enjoyed from the outside.

After a while they found the pavement so rough that they had to leave it and walk in the middle of the street. But they did not mind this much, as there seemed to be few vehicles in this part of the town.

They passed now down a grassy lane. Here the houses were much smaller and poorer than any upon which they had yet come.

The Senhora Rita lived in one of the poorest of the houses. The entrance had only a dirt floor. However, up a step or two was the little *sala* (parlor), with a cane-seat sofa, two or three chairs stiffly arranged, and a small table with a

vase of paper flowers. These articles formed the entire furniture of the room.

The Senhora greeted them kindly. She was really glad to see them. Would they not have off their stiff hats and rest their heads?

Miss Mary thanked her, and told her no, that the hats were not unpleasant. Besides, they had not long to stay that afternoon. There were other places to which they must go.

After a while Antoinette came in. She was a quaint looking-child, with a thin face, but exceedingly bright eyes. Her blue calico dress was tidy, but her *tamancos** were quite old and very much battered. Her hair, too, was somewhat disarranged. She had evidently been out in the wind. She gave her hand to each in a shy kind of way, then went and sat down by her mother on a corner of the settee.

Antoinette's older sister now came in also, and she, too, greeted them kindly.

"And when are you coming to school, Antoinette?" asked Miss Mary.

Antoinette looked at her mother as though for information. Evidently she was as much in the dark concerning that subject as Miss Mary herself.

Ere the mother could reply the older sister

* Wooden shoes.

spoke up: "Oh, I guess not at all, Miss Mary. It isn't our custom, you know. We have all done without going to school; so I guess Antoinette can do the same."

Yes, they had all "done without going to school!" Miss Mary realized with a sigh. Grandmother, mother, nor grown daughter could read or write. Ignorance as well as superstition seemed to be the lot of poorer women in Brazil. Not one in hundreds, nay, in thousands, had even the rudiments of an education. And this was also true to a considerable extent among the middle classes.

"But she is such a bright little thing," said Miss Mary to the Senhora Rita. "It seems such a pity not to let her go. You know I have told you it should not cost you a cent."

"But she has no clothes," objected the sister again.

"I am sure those she has on are good enough," said Miss Mary.

"Well, they are about all she has."

"In that case," said Miss Mary, "we'll make her all she needs. Here are two of my girls," turning to Emilia and Janita, "they will tell you how they like to sew."

"That we do, dear teacher," responded

Emilia, quickly, "it is always fun when the sewing hour comes."

"And we have so many pretty pieces on hand now from which to make new dresses!" exclaimed Janita. "Antoinette, you had better come and let us make you some."

Antoinette's eyes glowed. It surely wasn't through any fault of hers that she didn't go!

"She could not go alone, and that is certain!" said the sister, again.

"Oh, yes, she could," spoke the mother. "Antoinette is no baby. Besides, I could go with her once or twice to the gates myself. That is all she wants—to learn the way."

"I know the way now," declared Antoinette, forgetting for a moment to be shy, so great was her earnestness.

"But there are always donkeys and droves of cows in the streets," said her sister, again. "No, Antoinette, you had better not think of it. It is simply foolishness."

Miss Mary pressed the point no further. She saw plainly that if Antoinette was to become a pupil of the school, she must see and talk with the Senhora alone.

Religious services were now proposed, to which both mother and daughter consented eagerly. They were really desirous of knowledge

of this kind, always anxious to have the Scriptures read and to hear them talked about. They had only a few months before become members of the church to which Miss Mary, the other teachers, and many of the pupils of the mission school belonged, and since that time their conduct had been quite consistent with their profession.

They drank in eagerly every word of the chapter Miss Mary read, listened with rapt faces while Janita and Emilia sang, "I am so glad Jesus loves me," and then bent reverently forward for the prayer.

At its close Miss Mary talked to them many minutes, answering perplexed questions, quelling doubts, and sending all the light she could to shine upon their hearts.

Then the Senhora invited them into the little dining-room to have coffee. It was quite a plain room, its only furniture consisting of a table with two benches beside it and a hammock swung in one corner.

After the coffee, they went to look at the flowers, which the Senhora had in a little patch at one side of the house. She pressed Miss Mary to take all of them, but Miss Mary declined. She contented herself with admiring all, but took only a few. This is the way with

very polite hostesses in Brazil. Whatever you admire they tell you at once is yours, all yours. Many embarrassing situations have thus been brought about through literal interpretations on the part of those not versed in the ways of the country.

The next house they visited was much poorer than the one they had left, for all the floors were of dirt, and in the room into which they went the only furniture was a bench and a bed set close against the wall.

This was the home of the woman who did much of the washing for the college, and on the bed was her old mother, who was a helpless invalid.

But she was very cheerful and bright despite her years and her sufferings, and greeted Miss Mary and the girls with a smile.

"I am so glad you have come," she said, in a feeble voice.

"Thank you, mother, for saying that," Miss Mary replied. Then, as she bent over her, "How is it with you to-day?"

"The pain has been great, but the peace in my heart is the same. That never grows less. I bless my Saviour that he lets it stay there."

"What a blessed thing it is to trust him, mother."

“That it is! Once it was all dark, all desolate, all pain, all weariness and woe. No peace, no light, no joy, no Saviour, no anything. *Now, now,*” her voice growing shriller as she raised it, “NOW EVERYTHING!”

Miss Mary’s eyes were dropping tears as she bent nearer. She took one of the withered old hands in hers, stroking it gently, while she said :

“I cannot tell you, dear mother, how glad, nay, how rejoiced, I am that you have at last found that ‘peace that passeth all understanding.’ Now, you are not afraid to die.”

“No,” she said, firmly, “I am not afraid to die. But once, oh, what dread I had! There was purgatory. How horrible it seemed! and no money here on earth, as I knew, among those of my own flesh and blood to pay my poor soul out of torment if once it went there. It was the torture by day and the fire that burned by night, but now! but now!—what is it he—what is it this blessed Saviour has said?”

Miss Mary’s face bent lower still, her eyes were fixed with a burning light upon the old woman’s face. But as intense as was the feeling that mastered her she did not fail to stroke gently the hand that she held.

“What is it *he* has said?” repeated Miss Mary.

“Come—,” began the old woman.

“Yes; come, come,” helped Miss Mary, “come without—.”

“*Come without money, and without price!*”

The words rang through the little hut with the glad notes of triumph, of victory. Even the walls seemed to catch and to reëcho them. The very air thrilled with their gladness.

“Yes; ‘without money, and without price!’” repeated Miss Mary, “what a glorious, what a royal invitation it is, and worthy of the kingly Master who has given it.”

Three more houses were visited. In all three of these real missionary work had to be done, for they were the houses of those into whose hearts the precious light had not yet shined. At two of these homes they were received kindly, and their words earnestly listened to. Especially was the singing of the two girls given eager attention. But at the other house they were not only met with indifference, but they were as good as told they were not wanted at all. But Miss Mary had the stout heart and the determination of the true missionary. She was not easily driven back. An obstacle, even opposition, made her long all the more keenly

to overcome. So she bore with the utmost sweetness all the unkind words that were said, and, despite the surly looks given her, read bravely on through the chapter she had chosen in St. John. There was one at least in that crowd, she felt the hope, upon whose heart the seed had fallen as though upon fertile soil. This was a young man who, during all the time she was reading, stood leaning against the wall, seemingly indifferent, but whose eyes, she could feel, never once left her face after she had begun. What an earnest prayer went up to God for that soul, longing, hungering! She made up her mind it should not be the last time he should hear his Master's words.

On their return home they went by the spot at the river where the old lady's daughter was washing, the same one whose mother they had recently been to see. It was so late they were afraid they would not find her there, but Miss Mary wanted to speak to her particularly about her mother. There was a medicine she thought would help ease the pain. The money would be made up for it, if she would come to the college the next morning.

They found Maria at the river, though she was just getting ready to leave, having piled her rough-dried clothes in a huge basket.

In Piracicaba the washing is nearly all done at the riverside, and in the mornings and the late afternoons the washerwomen may be seen passing in great crowds to and from the river.

The woman stands in the water generally up to the ankles and beats the clothes on a pile of stones in front of her, using soap at intervals. By-and-by she spreads the clothes on the grass for the sun to extract the stains, for they are not boiled, but frequently wetted until they are very white and clean. This process usually takes two or three days, but no one is in a hurry in Brazil, even for clean linen, and so the washerwomen stand and chat as they dry their clothes, or call to each other, as they beat away in the process of getting the upper hand of the dirt, retailing their own, but oftener their neighbors', affairs.

Maria was indeed grateful to Miss Mary, and told her she would surely come. She was so glad they had been to see the dear old mother. She lifted the basket of clothes to her head, and the last they saw of her was when she turned to give them a smile as she passed around the corner of the street.

They gave her a wave of the hand in response, then walked on toward the college.

The day's visiting was ended. The little

missionary tour had been completed. In their Master's name they had gone forth, and in his name they had accomplished many sweet and beautiful things. Even the taunts and sneers they had received were for the time forgotten. They thought of the Senhora Rita and her daughter's eager longing to hear the precious gospel read and explained, of the thoughts and desires that already stirred their hearts; then of Maria's old mother passing away in the glad light, almost shouting out in her joy as the days went onward, bearing her nearer home. Of these things they thought, and of others that had been witnessed in the two cottages where they had also been gladly received, and their hearts were filled with a sweet peace and with the consciousness of time spent not in vain.

"This has been such a sweet evening," said Janita, as they walked along. "How I wish we could go every day!"

"But there are others that want that joy, too, my Janita," said Miss Mary; "so we must share with them."

"Yes," replied Janita, quickly and happily, "shared joys are the best joys in all the world."

"That they are, my Janita," and as she spoke Miss Mary placed her arm affectionately around her. "That is what makes the gospel, too,

such a sweet gospel, because we are to 'go tell it.'"

"I want to tell it every day!" declared Emilia, coming up to the other two and laying her arm upon Miss Mary's as it was around Janita's shoulders. "Oh, the beautiful, beautiful story! In all the world there is no other like it."

"And no Saviour like my Saviour," said Janita, softly.

"Nay, like *our* Saviour," said Miss Mary.

CHAPTER VII.

IZILDA COMES.

ONE of the pleasantest rooms of the school was the *escriptorio* (office). Here Miss Watson was to be found during several hours of the day, especially those set apart for conducting the business of the school. Here, too, she received most of her visitors, for the *sala* (parlor) was rarely used except on special occasions. It was to this room, also, that the other teachers came for consultation, and here that the pupils were sent from time to time either for correction or commendation.

It was, as I have said, a pleasant room, though there was nothing either grand or handsome about its appointments. Indeed, its furniture was quite plain and simple, consisting only of a desk, a settee, two rugs, some chairs, and a cabinet for curios. But it was the general air of the room that gave it its pleasant feature. Everything looked bright and cheerful, not the least of which was Miss Watson's gentle face with its kindly smile beaming upon all, with the exception, of course, of those who came for correction. Then the face could look stern, indeed, while the smile had vanished.

Doubtless one thing that helped give the room its charm was a bright bit of coloring visible here and there, for the pupils of the school had shown their love to and appreciation of their principal by adorning her office with various specimens of their work: bright pictures, wild flowers pressed and framed, card and photograph receivers, wall-pockets, newspaper holders, and the like.

On top of the cabinet of curios there was a wonderful stuffed bird that was the constant admiration of the younger visitors to the *escritorio*. This bird was about the size of a goose, though with longer legs. It was a delicate pink in coloring, with a crested head, and was of the water-fowl species. It had been given to Miss Watson by the husband of a former pupil. Not only the younger visitors noticed it, but the older ones also, for it really was a beautiful bird and its grace and shapeliness had been well preserved.

A few mornings after the missionary round, with which the last chapter closed, Miss Mary went into the *escritorio*.

She found Miss Watson very intently reading a letter, but she looked up as soon as Miss Mary approached.

“I have here a letter from the Senhor

Miguel," she said. "It seems that you were, after all, a most successful messenger," and she smiled.

"Is that really true?" questioned Miss Mary. "I am certainly rejoiced to hear it. It seems then that the trip did not prove one of pleasure alone."

"No, indeed. It was a successful one, as well. I have here the best of news from the Senhor Miguel," and she pointed to the letter.

"He surely hasn't succeeded in getting his wife's consent to placing Izilda in the school?" queried Miss Mary, with great surprise.

"That he has; and not only has he gained the consent of his wife, but he seems also to have brought over the priest."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Miss Mary. "I do not see how he accomplished it. His wife was so opposed, and then, too, she stood in such fear of the Father Anselmo. My surprise is truly overwhelming with reference to *him*," she concluded. "How was he ever brought to agree?"

"I think it was through a silver bait!" declared Miss Watson. "But read the letter. Doubtless you can then have a clearer idea."

Miss Mary took the letter and read it carefully. Then she said: "I see it all plainly now.

The Senhor Miguel is a shrewd man. Moreover, he is a spirited man, one used to having his own way. He has certainly carried things in a high-handed manner with the priest. It is not only that the silver bait has been given—that money has been paid to the priest—but the Senhor has also shown plainly that he intended anyhow to take matters into his own hands. I had a faint hope of this when I left him; only I knew he would not too harshly oppose his wife. He managed her through the priest. I can see it all clearly. Father Anselmo had gracefully to suggest that, *perhaps*, after all, there was not anything so very dreadful in sending Izilda to a Protestant school, especially as I had assured the Senhor that we did not *force* any child to renounce its religious belief. Perhaps, too, he hoped that the mother's strongly-grounded faith in the church would keep the child from straying away."

"Doubtless so. But it certainly is unusual, and I am surprised that the Senhor managed it, even by purchasing the consent of the priest. They are so bitter against us, and do so much to injure us in every way they can. The Father Anselmo will, doubtless, have a hard time convincing his brother priests that he did right."

“Oh, he’ll not show himself up in that light, you may rest assured. He’ll rather seek to throw all the blame upon the Senhor.”

“Which he, the Senhor, will not mind one bit!” declared Miss Watson.

“No, that he won’t,” assented Miss Mary. “I never saw a more fearless man, nor one firmer in his convictions.”

“Well, we’ll leave them to fight it out among themselves!” said Miss Watson, merrily. “That is none of our lookout. What most concerns us at present is that our sweet girl, the dear Izilda, is really coming to school. I have hoped it so long, for, without just knowing why, she has interested me strangely ever since the first time I saw her. She seems to have such a sweet, rare nature, and, if I mistake not, there is in her the making of a truly noble woman.”

“I agree with you fully,” said Miss Mary, with much feeling in her voice. “I, too, have grown greatly interested in her, more so than ever since my last visit to the *fazenda* and the taking place of the incidents which I have related to you.”

“The dear God keep and guide her,” said Miss Watson, earnestly, “and lead us all into doing only the thing that is best and right.”

“Amen!” added Miss Mary, fervently.

Janita and Emilia were filled with delight when they heard that Izilda was really coming to the school.

“Do please, Miss Mary, put her in the same dormitory with us, and do let her bed be by ours,” entreated Janita.

“That I will, my Janita. It was the very place I was thinking of putting her.”

“Oh, I am *so* glad she is coming!” exclaimed Emilia.

Izilda proved even a more promising pupil than had been anticipated. Her mind seemed to be fairly athirst for knowledge and to drink it in as the parched earth drinks in the rain. Her progress surprised even Miss Watson and Miss Mary. All her slumbering powers and ambitions were aroused.

“She will easily lead her class,” declared Miss Mary to Miss Watson. “How proud the Senhor will be!”

Izilda proved not only an apt pupil, thus pleasing her teachers, but she also grew to be quite a favorite with the other girls. It is true some of them thought her proud and haughty, but never after they learned to know her well. She was sweet and gracious to all, though sometimes reserved with those who did not meet her in the right spirit.

Her father wrote to her often, and was made even prouder and happier than Miss Mary had predicted by the news of his daughter's remarkable progress.

But another change had come to Izilda, a change even more wonderful than that that had taken place in her mental life. Miss Mary had said, and said truly, that they never *forced* a pupil to renounce her religious faith. At the same time she had fearlessly declared that the endeavor was made to give to each what was "felt and believed to be the true Christian instruction." Senhor Miguel himself had said that this was "fair enough," and Senhor Miguel was a just man. He had, therefore, unhesitatingly sent his daughter to this school, knowing that she would therein receive a religious instruction altogether different from that to which she had been used. He had declared, "Izilda is old enough now to have penetration for herself, to know how to make choice of what is best for her," and evidently Izilda did.

It would have been impossible for a mind so quick, so bright, so comprehensive as hers to have had those precious truths put before it and not to have grasped them in all their power.

Again and again she heard the story of the Babe of Bethlehem, never changing, but ever new, beautiful as the sunlight that bathed the earth in its glow morning after morning, and like the sunlight giving warmth and joy and life to all. It was just the story to appeal peculiarly to one so generous as Izilda. What! *one* man coming to die for the sins of a *whole world*! *Could* anything be nobler, grander, more glorious? *Why* had she never heard it in this way before? *Why* had it never been told to her with all its beauty and touching appeal? It is true she had heard of him, but, oh, in such a different way! Usually it had been as Mary's Son, as one far away, as one to be reached through Mary's intercession. But now he had been shown to her as *her* Saviour, her very own, her personal Saviour, her Jesus, to whom she could go in her weakness and sin, before whom she could lay bare all her heart, and upon whom she could call for help and strength and guidance all along the way. It seemed too good to be true. The best part of all was this loving, precious Saviour asked for no money, no gift, save that of self, in return for all that he had done. One was simply to *come* to him, trusting and *believing*, and that was all. "If any man thirst, let him come unto

me and drink." And "whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." *That* was what he had said, this loving, tender Saviour, nay, what he was *saying* all the time, saying to *her*. How sweet, how beautiful were the words!

Izilda's soul was full of joy, as yet indefinable and inexpressible even to herself. She only knew it was there, and that it was, oh, so unutterably sweet!—the very sweetest that had come to her in life. All the day long she felt the gladness of it, all the day long, too, there was a song in her throat, on her lips, like the song of the bird, the melody of which has been born in the heart. It was more the joy of knowledge than that of acceptance. As sweet as was the first, the second was infinitely sweeter, and that, too, the newly-awakened soul of Izilda was to know in all its joyousness "not many days hence."

It was Miss Mary who carried the first glad, good news to Miss Watson, for only that morning she had had a talk with Izilda. As joyous as was the news she bore, Miss Mary was nevertheless disturbed.

"What *will* her father say? I am afraid he will think that we, after all, have betrayed the trust he reposed."

“Such a thing was obliged to come to Izilda,” replied Miss Watson, “a girl of her penetration of mind could not long remain under the teaching given here without discerning the good from the bad, the true from the false. I anticipated it, and I must say I rejoice with all my heart. O Sister Mary, get the cloud from your brow, give your fears and perplexities to the winds, and rejoice with me over the soul that has come out of the darkness of evil and superstition into the precious day-dawn of knowledge and of truth!”

“I do rejoice, and with all my heart,” declared Miss Mary, with deep emotion, “but I cannot help but entertain the gravest fears for the child. Her mother and the priest will certainly have her taken away when they know it, then what *is* to be her future? Oh, it wrings my heart when I think of it! Izilda is so constituted that she will not give up readily, willingly. There will be a long, hard struggle. What will be the outcome of it? Oh, if her father only knew! Somehow I have great hope in him. He is a just man as well as a sensible, practical one. I have again and again heard that he takes the stand that every one should be allowed his own religious convictions. He will at least not allow the child to be persecuted.

Of that I am sure. I do wish he knew," she repeated.

"Wait," cautioned Miss Watson; "wait at least a few days, even weeks. Let the dear child be fully assured, let her grow *strong* in her convictions, give her knowledge, experience, training, such as every new soldier of Christ Jesus needs, then let her write to her father. It will be for him to say whether she goes or stays."

That very afternoon something happened, something that did not promise well for poor Izilda's peace of mind.

It was understood in the school that when any of the older girls wanted to go shopping, they could do so under the care of one of the teachers.

The shops in Piracicaba are really delightful places to visit, though they are for the most part small, and present on the outside such unattractive appearance. One reason why they do not look more inviting is because there are no displays of goods in the windows. Everything is kept securely put away in boxes or other receptacles on the inside. The object of this is to keep the articles protected from the sun and the dampness, and also from the various insects. But when once you enter the stores

and ask for what you want, then a delightful variety is at once shown you by the obliging clerk. The richest of silks and velvets and laces may often be found in the very poorest-looking of the shops, which gives one a very forcible impression of the truth of the proverb: "It is not best to judge by outside appearances."

Izilda's father, as has been said, was a very indulgent father. He liberally supplied her with pocket-money. As she liked bright and pretty things, visits were made every now and then to the shops. This proved a source of never-changing delight to her, especially as she had been so much in the country, where this pleasure could not be indulged in. But Izilda bought not only for herself but for others. She was very generous, and was constantly bestowing tokens of affection upon her schoolmates. She gave, too, to the poorer ones because of their need. She was, indeed, a joy and a blessing to the school.

On the morning preceding this particular afternoon, Miss Watson had given her consent to a shopping excursion on Izilda's part, "provided the weather was favorable." It had not looked at all promising that morning, for the clouds were heavy and dark; but towards noon

it began to clear, and about the same time Izilda, who had been anxiously watching the sky through one of the windows, came running to where Miss Mary was standing with Janita and Emilia. They were to go with her that afternoon, and that made Izilda doubly happy.

"It is going to clear; I know it is," she added, confidently; "I heard a goat sneeze a little while ago."

"Why, what has that to do with it, Izilda?" asked Miss Mary, with a smile.

"Oh! Miss Mary, don't you know? But maybe you don't, as you haven't been in the country much. That is quite a weather sign out there. When they hear a goat sneeze the older people, that is, the knowing ones, will nod their heads and say, 'That means fair weather.'"*

"Doesn't a goat ever sneeze in bad weather, Izilda?" asked Miss Mary; "I should think the raw air would tickle his nose."

"Oh, I don't know about that, Miss Mary; I suppose they do, but not so much, I guess. At

*This is the belief in many parts of Brazil. Round Rio and other places the proverb has grown, "When a goat sneezes the weather will be fair." Hon. G. C. Andrews, ex-Consul to Brazil, makes mention of this in his interesting work on that country.

any rate, I heard that goat sneeze, and there is the sky clearing. So, darling Miss Mary," throwing her arms around her, "I feel sure we shall go."

Izilda proved a true prophet, and the goat sign for once an accurate one, for by afternoon the sun was shining brightly.

They left the college about four o'clock and walked toward the main street. At one of the corners they had to stop to let a funeral procession pass. There were thirty or more carriages in the procession. They were open carriages, and each was drawn by two mules. There were few ladies in the carriages, nearly all being men; for in the cities in Brazil ladies, even the nearest relations, rarely ever accompany the body to the place of burial. The carriages were being driven at a rapid pace, and many of the men were laughing and talking, even smoking. However, when the hearse passed groups of men on the streets nearly all of them lifted their hats. This was done as a mark of respect to the dead. As they came in sight of the principal Catholic church of the town this custom of raising the hat was again observed, for many of the men who passed the church lifted their hats with the utmost reverence. This they do, not from any superstition, as is

declared, but as a “delicate expression of religious sentiment.”

There were many ladies out shopping, and the principal stores were crowded with customers, but Izilda soon found what she wanted. After that a walk was proposed to the river bank, where, from the terrace, such a fine view is to be had of the falls. As they were coming back they suddenly encountered Father Anselmo. They had been closely engaged in conversation with each other, or they would have noticed him some moments ere they did. He evidently saw them as soon as they came into view, for he deliberately stopped and awaited their approach. They were overcome with embarrassment the moment they raised their eyes and saw him, especially poor Izilda. Indeed, the meeting so took her by surprise that she neglected a very important little ceremony, one to which Father Anselmo had been used, and one, moreover, by which he set great store. This was the observance of a custom that prevailed among the mothers and daughters of the higher classes, that of kissing the hand of the family priest, especially when meeting him after a considerable absence. Izilda had heretofore rarely failed to bestow upon Father Anselmo this mark of respect, though inwardly

rebellious many times ; never had she omitted it when meeting after so long an absence. But now she merely bowed to him as he stood regarding her intently. For the life of her she could not have gone through with the old ceremony at that moment. It was not so much a return of her old repugnance to the *padre* as it was that new feeling in her heart that seemed holding her back.

The priest's face flushed angrily, and he showed his feelings in the question he asked : "Is this really the Dona Izilda, daughter of the Senhora Isabel?"

"Yes, Father Anselmo," she quietly replied, though inwardly she was trembling with apprehension.

She made a step or two forward, as though she would now endeavor, at any cost, to go through with the ceremony she realized she had made so great a mistake in omitting a moment before. But even now she could not do it ; now, too, it was too late. The force of this came to her fully with the priest's next remark : "Well, all I can say is that her own mother would hardly recognize her. As to whether she will own her or not, remains to be seen." This he said insinuatingly, and was evidently on the point of turning away, but Izilda stopped him.

* “Father Anselmo,” she said, pleadingly, “I do wish you would tell me about my home. You have come from there since I had a letter. Is my mother quite well? and how is it with my father?”

He seemed on the point of turning away from her without answering, but doubtless his better nature prevailed. “Your mother is in the best of health, though I cannot say in the best of spirits,” he added, by way of a little thrust. “Your father is not so well. The cares of his plantation seem to tax him greatly. He has been complaining, too, of pains in his head.”

Izilda seemed on the point of crying, but bravely controlled herself. “Yes, he wrote me something about it, but not much. He just won’t say much about himself. I do hope it is nothing serious.”

“Perhaps not,” returned the priest. “But I must go now. I have a long journey before me to a distant part of the State. It will keep me two weeks or more. When I return, Dona Izilda, I shall take great pleasure in telling your mother that I have seen you. Will she believe me when I state to her that you never once said, ‘*A benço meu pai?*’* *Bom dia,*

*This means, “Your blessing, father,” and is the form of words with which nearly all devout Catholics greet their priest.

Dona Izilda," and lifting his hat with a little sneering smile, he suddenly turned the corner of the street. Not once had he condescended to notice either of the Dona Izilda's companions. He had not even shown the politeness of giving them a look when leaving. But they certainly were not overcome by this omission. Their thoughts were all now of the Dona Izilda. How wretched she looked, almost as though she would fall, and her face was so white. Miss Mary slipped her arm about her quickly, while Janita and Emilia hovered near in great solicitude.

"Don't worry, my dear," said Miss Mary. "I am sure your father is not very sick, or word would have been sent you."

"Yes, I feel so, too, dear Miss Mary, but I can't help being worried and anxious. Dear father! he just will not take the rest he needs. But that was so dreadful," she continued, clasping her hands nervously together, "what the *padre* intimated with reference to my mother. He will tell her, and she will be, oh, so angry! Why could I not have kissed his hand? But I could not, I just could not!" she broke off suddenly.

There was a little shop near by kept by a woman Miss Mary knew well. She was not

one of their church members, but she was a friend, and, besides, was a woman who did not talk much, save now and then about her own affairs. Miss Mary felt that she could trust her. She must get Izilda somewhere, anywhere, almost, to be off the street, for she was now dangerously near hysterics. It would never do for her to encounter in this frame of mind the scrutiny of so many eyes. So she hurried her away, just around the corner, to the shop of old Donita Scobia.

Donita was at home, and so fully launched into the turbulent waters of a recent occurrence in her own household as to notice Izilda but little after the first recognition. Thus the young girl had ample time to recover herself. Toward this end she made brave effort, for she now saw how she was distressing her dear friends.

Donita had recently met with a loss, quite a heavy loss for her. Her money box had been robbed and five whole days' earnings had been spirited away. She had tried every way to discover it, to trace the criminal, without avail. She had even gone to the image of San Antonio that she had in the house, she told Miss Mary, and offered it gifts, and entreated it to tell her where the money was. But it had been silent,

not an intimation of any kind had come to her. The money was still lost and she had no idea where the thief was, and the saint was so mean he would not give her a single thought in her head. She had grown exasperated with him at last, and so had finally taken the image down and whipped it.* Now if he knew what was good for himself, he would direct her about that money!

“I feel assured, Donita,” said Miss Mary, gently, “that all you have done with reference to the image will be of no avail. Why did you not call in the police?”

“What good could the police do?” questioned Donita.

“They might at least have found some clue.”

“But the police don’t want to bother. Why, they will hardly come when you cry out to them for help, so unwilling are they to stir their lazy bones. You might be murdered for all they’d care! But I know what I’ll do!” she added quickly, “I’ll take an offering and go to the priest. He will beseech the Virgin for me. Surely she will not let a poor widow suffer such loss,” and Donita looked on the verge of

*This incident actually occurred in Brazil. A small image of San Antonio was whipped in just this way.

growing tearful, as she put her apron to her face.

Miss Mary said no more on the subject, for she felt it would be useless. Rays from the one pure Light must first enter this heart ere these shadows of darkness and superstition could be dispelled. But though she said no more, yet she did not dismiss Donita and the subject from her mind. She resolved she would come again. Perhaps then she could have such a talk with her as she desired. Now she only said: "Good-bye to you, Donita, and may you have good luck and soon find your money. We thank you for the hospitality of your home. We were tired. The Dona Izilda especially needed rest, so we thought we would come in for a while."

"And glad I am that you did," returned Donita quickly and courteously. "Am sorry you won't stay longer. But come again. I hope then to tell you our Gracious Lady has helped me find my money. *Passe bien* (literally, 'may you pass well')" she concluded, as she arose and bowed. Then following them to the door bowed again, and again said: "*Passe bien!*"

"*Passe bien!*" returned Miss Mary, bowing too, and smiling.

All bowed as the door was reached, then passed out.

“Oh, how foolish it is of her to think the Virgin will help her find the money!” said Emilia, as they were going down the street. “And how terrible and ridiculous, too, all that was about that image of San Antonio! O Miss Mary, *how* glad I am that I had a Christian mother, though she died when I was so young I do not remember much about her,” and Emilia’s eyes filled with tears that that remembrance was not stronger. “But I recall enough to know that there was never anything like this in our home, but instead we had the Bible, and dear good Mr. Raynor came to see us often, and my mother knew the story of Jesus, the dear Saviour, the precious Redeemer of the world. And she taught it to my brother and myself, so that when I came to the mission school it was no new story, though, dear Miss Mary,” she concluded, looking at her teacher with a world of love and gratitude in her eyes, “there is *much more* that I have learned about it through you and the other dear ones.”

“Oh, what a happy girl,” exclaimed Izilda, “to have had *that* in your childhood home!”

Her eyes were swimming in tears as the words were spoken, and her lips trembled so

it took her some moments to say them. She was evidently thinking of her childhood home and of the darkness and superstition that reigned therein despite its other happy surroundings. That the thought brought with it much of pain and of bitterness one pair of eyes at least could see. The eyes were Miss Mary's, and as they looked upon this picture of such utter woe for one so young, the true, tender heart of the good missionary was stirred to its depths. How much of patient teaching, of wise counsel, of earnest, steadfast help she would yet need; for, oh, how great would, doubtless, be the trials before her!

“The Lord be merciful unto thee, and bless thee, and cause his face to shine upon thee,” said Miss Mary, softly.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

I ZILDA had now been three months at the school, and one had passed since the events recorded in the last chapter. She had had two letters from home since meeting the priest, in each of which her father had written cheerfully, and he seemed to be getting better. From her mother she did not hear direct, but received messages through her father. She wondered what had become of Father Anselmo. She recalled that he had said he expected to be gone two weeks. It was now a month. He had undoubtedly been detained; perhaps had had to extend his journey far beyond its original limits. She felt assured he had not returned, for she knew full well that had he done so, he would have communicated with her mother, and she (Izilda) would have heard from it in this time. She was very happy at the school, as happy as she could be away from home; and such a new joy had come into her heart, for Izilda knew Jesus now as *her* Jesus, and felt the gladness of sins forgiven. She was such a help to the teachers in many ways,

always ready and willing to assist, despite her independent position in the school. She was adored by the little ones, whom she was sometimes allowed to teach, and for whom she was always planning something either to pleasantly instruct or to amuse. She loved all her teachers and many of her schoolmates, for she had such a big, warm heart; but she loved Miss Mary better than any one in all the world next to those of her own family.

They had never had the least trouble with Izilda with reference to the discipline of the school. Though altogether different from that to which she had been used at home, she nevertheless seemed to fall into and observe its requirements without difficulty. It was, doubtless, that she had made up her mind from the first day to be obedient, and when that resolve was fixed, whatever battle there was to be won was already won. But Izilda loved the school, loved to be there with those who seemed to have her best interests so deeply at heart, and its laws and regulations were thus not hard to keep.

One of the sweetest hours of all the school life to Izilda was the prayer hour. This came soon after sundown. The girls assembled in the dining-room. A chapter in the Bible was

read; then each girl was required to repeat a Bible verse. In order that they might have all the encouragement possible toward memorizing these verses, little books containing the Psalms or the Gospel of St. John, in large, clear type, were distributed among the girls. They called these verses their "Little Pillows," on which they slept at night, and thought ere sleeping of all God's goodness and love to them. These verses were so beautiful to Izilda! How she did love to learn and to repeat them, and to say them over and over again to herself at night after she had lain down!

After prayers came the study hour, then a time for recreation, during which each girl had a slice or two of bread and butter, and generally a cup of tea. One would have thought Izilda would have murmured at this. But not so. She partook of the frugal meal with the utmost sweetness and relish, and seemed really to enjoy it as much as any of the bounteous repasts eaten in her own home.

On going to bed at night each girl offered her hand to her teacher and said, "*Boa noite.*" That meant good-night. To one teacher Izilda gave more than her hand, she gave her a kiss, and was rewarded by being clasped close in a pair of loving arms. That teacher was Miss Mary.

Thus Izilda's life passed at the school, and every day it seemed there was some new joy in her heart. But it must not be thought that she did not have her hours of sadness also. These would come every now and then, despite the love and care that surrounded her. It was generally while thinking of her home and of her mother and of Father Anselmo that these hours came. Oh! how it wrung her heart when she thought of the falseness of the religion in which her dear mother believed! How vain, how foolish, nay, how wicked, were its observances! What a shame it was for Father Anselmo and the other priests to so blind the eyes of the people! for *they* must know of the true way, of the true Saviour; *they* had the Bible, and could read it. Why were they not kinder? Why were they not truer? Why did they not tell the people? Izilda's heart yearned to go and tell them herself, to tell her own people first—her father, her mother, her sisters—and then to tell others; but, most of all, her heart yearned over her mother, so proud, so haughty, and so blinded, yet so dear. Oh! if she, too, could but find this precious Jesus! She must do it. Izilda resolved that she must. She would show him to her mother in such a way she could not help

but see. But then came the thought, and with it a fear, what would her mother say? what would she do? how would she receive this wonderful, wonderful revelation she had to make? Would she listen? would her heart melt? would she receive the message, or would she, on the other hand—and how Izilda's heart sank when she thought of this—would she frown? would she look angry, would she even forbid Izilda to speak such things in her presence? Thus Izilda's heart vibrated between love and fear.

As many times as she had written to her father since the change came she had not told him of it. She felt that she could not. It was not that she feared him, for he was all that was gentle and kind to her, and she knew, too, his liberal views with reference to religious matters. But it was more a reticence, a timidity, that held her back. She felt that she could not put it upon paper. Such precious thoughts could not be written. But each time she would say, "I will write it the next time."

Miss Mary, too, had begun to urge her to tell her father. She felt that it ought not to be kept from him any longer. He ought to be told; then he could decide how to act. Every time, however, that Miss Mary proposed this, Izilda would beg for yet a little while longer.

Thus matters stood when we reach this point in Izilda's life.

It was Miss Mary's time to go visiting that evening, and she had said that she would take Janita and Izilda with her. How glad they both were to go, Izilda especially, for now that she had found Jesus, the dear Saviour, she wanted to see the joy on the faces of other when they too were told of him. And, oh! what a precious thing it was to be one of his messengers, to bear the glad news, even though in so feeble a way! For Izilda could do little more than to help Miss Mary now and then understand what the people said, or to tell them, in turn, more clearly what Miss Mary meant, for Miss Mary had not as yet learned the language thoroughly, and was sometimes really perplexed to make herself fully understood or to understand. Izilda was really of much help to her in this way. But she could help in other ways, too, for she had a sweet voice and could sing, and sometimes Miss Mary let her read verses from the Bible or repeat them from memory. Izilda was never happier than when doing this. It was such a joy to her heart to see their sad faces brighten when some precious verse, with its comforting promise, was repeated. On this afternoon the first one they visited was a young

woman who lived in a neat, comfortable house not far from one of the principal streets. She had been sick for several months, and her disease had perplexed the physicians. Sometimes she would have violent spasms, during which the contortions of her face and body were terrible to see. Then, again, she would be as gentle and quiet as the gentlest child, and perfectly rational, too. She was in this latter state on this afternoon when Miss Mary and the young girls entered, and Miss Mary was so glad to see it. She had visited the young woman once or twice before, and the hope was in her heart that a faint ray, at least, of the true Light had entered her darkened mind. But, oh, the work, the effort, the patience that were needed yet, and the prayer!

The young woman's mother was by her bed as they entered. She volunteered the information even before they were seated: "The *padre* has been here, and he says he knows what is the matter. After much prayer and long intercession, it has at last been revealed to him."

Miss Mary looked the question which she did not speak. The old woman continued: "He says she is possessed of a devil. That is what enters her head and causes her to do as she does. He says it is because the salt in this

house has lost its savor. He has now taken it away. He will make a cross of it at the Virgin's feet and burn it;* then we will pay so much to the church, and Marta will get well."

Miss Mary looked her pity, her compassion, but said nothing to the mother, only bowed her head by way of showing that she had listened to the recital. Turning to the daughter, she asked, "How are you to-day, Marta?"

Marta smiled. She now had her right mind, and could understand. "I feel a little better," she said, "but all is so troubled here," pointing to her heart; "and I have wanted *you* to come so much. I want to hear more out of the book you have brought."

Miss Mary seated herself by the bed, opened the little worn Testament, and read from the first chapter of St. John.

"That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," repeated Miss Mary. Then she said, turning to Marta, "That means Jesus, Marta; Jesus our Saviour, Jesus the Light of the world. He came into the world that light might shine amid the darkness, that he might give peace for tumult, and joy for sorrow. In him is this light, and through him, through believing on him, all may receive it."

* Of actual occurrence in Brazil.

“How beautiful that is!” said Marta. “Can it be that this Light is really to be for me? for *me?*” she repeated, her lips quivering.

“Yes, Marta, for you—for all who believe in him.”

“Why did he not stay here while he was on earth?” asked Marta, suddenly.

“Because his work on earth was ended, and he must return to his Father in heaven. But the Light, this precious Light, was left, for he is still the Light of the world, though he dwells in heaven. But all those who call upon his name, who have faith in him, who believe that he is really their Saviour, to all such he gives this precious Light to dwell in their hearts.”

Much more Miss Mary said to Marta, and there was gladness in her heart as she noted that the young woman seemed to catch her meaning with more of clearness than ever before, though there was much that was yet in darkness, in mystery, to this groping mind. And there was the priest coming all the time and ready to undo all her work; but she could trust and pray and come, too, whenever she could, and these things she resolved to do.

Janita and Izilda sang for Marta one of their sweet hymns, and how eagerly she listened!

She even plead for another when it was finished, and Miss Mary told them to sing again.

They left the house, passed off the street for several blocks, then turning into a grassy lane, went along it for some distance. They went by so many houses that Janita and Izilda began to wonder where Miss Mary *could* be going. After a while they came to a miserable-looking little house that stood quite alone. Indeed, it could hardly be called a house, it was more of a hut. It was built of bamboo poles, with mud daubed in between. Janita recognized the place. She had been near there before, and she had heard much about it.

“O dear Miss Mary,” she cried, “do not go in there, please do not! That is where old Castilia Sutro lives. She is nearly a hundred years old, so the people say. She is going to die soon; she just can’t last much longer, and she doesn’t want any one to come about her but the priests. They go there every day; they may be there now. Oh! please, Miss Mary, do not go in; something dreadful may happen.”

“Why, my cowardly Janita!” exclaimed Miss Mary, as she turned upon her with reproachful eyes. “Can this really be *my* Janita talking? Do you not think,” she continued, “that because she is old and sick and about to

die, those are the very reasons why we ought to go in?"

"But the priests, Miss Mary, the priests! They may make a terrible scene."

"We must brave even the priests, Janita, if we are going to do this soul good."

Izilda, who had heretofore been only a quiet observer of this scene, now spoke: "Janita is doubtless right, Miss Mary. There may be great danger in going. I have heard often of old Castilia Sutro. My father knows her well. She is the oldest person in Piracicaba, doubtless the oldest in all the State, at least a hundred years old. I think I know why the priests visit her so much, why they want to keep everybody else away. She is said to have a very old piece of embroidery, an altar cloth, or something of the kind, which she brought with her from Spain, and which she in some way obtained from one of the churches. It is worth a great many dollars. Indeed, I have heard it said the value in dollars could hardly be put upon it, it is so priceless in other ways. The priests are afraid that she will die before giving up this cloth to them; that she will, in fact, bestow it upon some one else. That is why they watch her so closely. Some of them may be in there now; so, Miss Mary, perhaps it is best not to go."

But Miss Mary only smiled as she said, "We will take the risk. So come, my dears. Who knows what good we may do this poor soul?"

As miserable as the house looked on the outside, it was even more wretched within. The walls were of mud and the floor of dirt, and there was little furniture, save a narrow bed in one corner of the room. On this lay a frail, shrunken and emaciated creature. Indeed, so wasted was she that she seemed little more than skin and bones. But her eyes were very bright, and these she now turned upon them, glowing either with excitement or resentment. Miss Mary could not tell which at first.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" she asked, in a weak, though shrill, voice.

"Friends," returned Miss Mary, approaching the bed, "and we have come to see if we can do anything for you."

"No, you can't; so you had better be gone."

"But we do not like to go until we have done something to help you. Are you not in pain?"

"Yes, I am in pain, but why do *you* care about it?"

"I care a great deal. Please tell me where the pain is?"

“It is here in my head,” and she laid upon her forehead her thin fingers, looking, with their long nails, almost like the claws of a beast.

Miss Mary approached, and, bending down, began to rub the head of the poor old creature, at first gently and slowly, then more rapidly. Now and then she dampened her fingers from a small bottle of camphor she carried in her little hand-bag.

The old woman seemed very grateful, and did not longer question their right to be there. Indeed, she began to talk to them quite pleasantly, though her voice was far from sounding so, it was so thin and feeble. Miss Mary was much struck by the intelligence she displayed. She had certainly been an unusual woman in her day.

“Would you like to have the girls sing for you?” asked Miss Mary, to which old Castilia at once consented.

As the words of the sweet hymn, “I am so glad Jesus loves me,” were finished, the emaciated form struggled to a sitting posture, the eyes glowing, the lips trembling.

“I have never heard anything like that before—never! never!” she cried. “Who are you?” she asked, suddenly turning to Miss Mary.

“I am one who cares for you,” was the answer; “nay, one who loves you, and wants to see you learn of the one true way ere you go hence.”

“What *is* the true way?” she asked, eagerly, and with her eyes fixed with a burning intensity upon Miss Mary’s face.

“Through the blood of Jesus our Saviour that was shed for our sins.”

“Yes, Mary’s Son. He died upon the cross. We kiss the cross *so*,” taking a well-worn crucifix from under her pillow, and placing her lips to it again and again. “We kiss the cross, and ask the Holy Mother to intercede for us, to pity our sorrows. Then we put money into the box to show that we care for the church, and that causes her to bend her ear to us, for she is not only queen of heaven, but she is queen of the church, too. That is the way, is it not?”

“No, oh, *no!*” answered Miss Mary, earnestly. “Jesus is our Saviour, our *very own* Saviour. We go right *to him*, and ask him for what we want. We tell *him* our woes, our sorrows, our trials, and *he* it is who hears and understands and sends forgiveness and comfort.”

“All this is very strange. I have never heard of anything like this before. Is it really true

that he will condescend to hear? that he will listen to *me*, a poor creature like *me*?"

"Yes, oh, yes; he hears all who come to him earnestly. We have only to trust him, to believe that there is such a Saviour, that he died for us, and that he will forgive our sins, if only we ask for this forgiveness with our whole hearts filled with sorrow for the wrong we have done."

"Can it be that he will hear me? will hear *me*?" she repeated over and over again.

"Yes, mother, he will hear."

"And did you really say that we did not have to go to the Virgin first, that we did not have to give gifts to her, but that this Jesus, our Saviour, would bend his own ear to hear? that he would listen to what we ourselves said?"

"Yes, mother; this Jesus, *our* Saviour, will do all this and more. He will not only hear, but he will answer our prayers; he will send the knowledge that our sins are forgiven."

"Oh, teach me *how* to pray to him, tell me *the words* to say," she pleaded.

Miss Mary knelt down. She took the withered, trembling hand in hers and bent her forehead upon it as it lay upon the bed.

"I will teach you the words, mother," she

replied. "I will teach you how to pray to him, to our Lord and Saviour. Say the words after me, just a few at a time."

It was an earnest, heartfelt, yet simple prayer to God for the forgiveness of sins that old Castilia's trembling lips repeated after Miss Mary. She seemed to feel, to know, to understand, at least in part, for there was a wonderful light aglow in her eyes as the words ceased. Yet the old chains of darkness and of superstition were still about her. They were too strong, they bound her too tightly to be broken asunder at one wrench, even by one so forceful as this. That they did bind her still and closely was evidenced by the words she soon spoke:

"Now I shall kiss the crucifix, and it will be all right."

"No, mother, *no!*" interposed Miss Mary. "*That* has nothing to do with the prayer. *That* cannot help. See, it is only a senseless bit of wood. It is for that which is *in the heart*, for that which *we feel*, that Jesus cares."

"Oh, it is still very, very dark!" cried poor old Castilia, in her distress. "There are so many things I do not understand. Tell me more! tell me more! Make it as plain, as bright as you can."

For fully a half-hour longer Miss Mary sat talking to her. Over and over again was the sweet Story of the Cross repeated. Over and over again was she told of the Saviour who loved poor, weak, sinful creatures well enough to come and die for them; and whose heart was so tender, so pitying, so kind, that we have only to feel sorry for sin and to tell him so to get forgiveness.

She read, too, to old Castilia from the little pocket Testament, and had both Janita and Izilda to repeat verses, and to sing yet another time. Then, kneeling down, she prayed long and fervently that the darkness might flee and the glad light come—come to take up its dwelling-place in Castilia's heart.

"Now, I must go," Miss Mary said, as she arose from her knees. "It is late; the sun is sinking."

"Nay, do not go!" entreated old Castilia. "Tell me more, *more!*"

This seemed ever her cry, "*more, more!*"

"But I cannot now," answered Miss Mary, keenly distressed that she could not. "I must go; it is late. However, mother, I will come again."

"*W hen* will you come again?"

Miss Mary hesitated. Her heart prompted

her to say "to-morrow," but she knew she could not. With all she then had in view, she feared it would be at least a week ere she could return. Old Castilia moaned piteously when she heard it.

"A week? a week?" she cried. "Oh, that is *so* long to wait! *so* long to wait!"

"Well, then," said Miss Mary, earnestly, her heart touched to its core by the old creature's eagerness, "I will try to come in three days."

"But even three days are *long*, oh, *so long!*"

"I know it, mother, and I would come sooner if I could. Be of good cheer. Trust Jesus, this dear Saviour of whom you now know, this tender, pitying Saviour, always so ready to hear and to answer."

"I will, I will try, but, oh, he seems so far away, and much there is that is dark, oh, *so* dark!"

True to her word, in three days' time Miss Mary went again to see old Castilia. But she found the priests there, who ordered her away at once, not even allowing her to enter. She knew she must obey them or else some terrible scene might occur.

The next time she found the house entirely deserted. The priests had removed the old

woman. A week later she heard Castilia was dead.

Over and over again Miss Mary grieved that she had not gone sooner to see this poor old woman. Oh, how great had been her need! how ready she was to accept the precious teachings of the gospel! how eager to creep out of the pall-like shadows into the clear, sweet light of the truth! And she had given her such feeble help at the best, carried the trembling feet but a little way, had led her only to within sight of the shadow's edge. From there the light shone afar off, and, oh, *so* faintly because it *was* afar off.

Now that she had gone and it was too late, bitter was Miss Mary's regret. And yet she really had nothing with which to reproach herself, for she had done the best that she could. There were so many souls that needed her ministry just as this one had, souls that she had found first. Her time had been given to them faithfully, constantly, as much of it as she could.

Old Castilia was but one of the multitude in this great darkened, heathen land, but one of the multitude of souls going out into the beyond, groping blindly, piteously, amid the shadows, because so many of these there were,

and so few to tell them the beautiful, wondrous story of him who is "the Light of the world."

How sad it was—because it was true—of this vast country, covering more than three millions of square miles, that there was "*not more than one missionary on an average to every 138,000 souls!*"

CHAPTER IX.

"YOUR BLESSING, FATHER."

I ZILDA, Janita, and Emilia were having an earnest talk that morning, a real heart-to-heart talk. It was Saturday morning, and so they had the time to themselves.

The talk was about something they had been reading in a book Miss Mary had lent them, a something so touching and beautiful that it stirred them to the depths of their hearts. It was the story of a saint, and it was called *The Holy Shadow*.

"Read it again, dear Emilia," Izilda said, and taking up the book Emilia read:

"Long, long ago there lived a saint so pure and good that the astonished angels came down from heaven to see how a mortal could be so godly. He simply went about his daily life diffusing virtue as the star diffuses light and the flower perfume, without even being aware of it. Two words summed up his day: he gave, he forgave. Yet these words never fell from his lips; they were expressed in his ready smile, in his forbearance, and in his charity.

"The angels said to God, 'O Lord, grant him

the gift of miracles.’ God replied, ‘I consent; ask what he wishes.’

“So they said to the saint: ‘Should you like the touch of your hands to heal the sick?’

“‘No,’ answered the saint, ‘I would rather God should do that.’

“‘Should you like to convert guilty souls, and bring back guilty hearts to the right path?’

“‘No; that is the mission of the angels. I pray, I do not convert.’

“‘What do you desire, then?’ cried the angels.

“‘That God give me grace; with that should I not have everything?’

“But the angels insisted: ‘You must ask for a miracle, or one will be forced upon you.’

“‘Very well,’ said the saint, ‘then I will ask that I may do a great deal of good without ever knowing it.’

“The angels were greatly perplexed. They took counsel together and resolved upon the following plan: Every time the saint’s shadow should fall behind or on either side, so that he could not see it, it should have the power to cure disease, soothe pain, and comfort sorrow.

“And it came to pass, when the saint walked along, that his shadow thrown on the ground on either side, or behind him, made arid paths

green, caused withered plants to bloom, gave clear water to dried-up brooks, fresh color to pale little children, and joy to unhappy mothers.

“But the saint simply went about his daily life diffusing virtue as the star diffuses light and the flower perfume, without even being aware of it.

“And the people, respecting his humility, followed him silently, never speaking to him about his miracles. Little by little they came even to forget his name, and called him only the Holy Shadow.”

“Oh, I think it too bad that he didn't know when he did good!” said Janita. “All the pleasure was taken out of it.”

“But he was so modest, so numble, that he did not wish to know,” returned Emilia. “A few people are this way, and I don't know but that they are all the happier for it, though it does seem it would gratify their hearts to see and know the effects of their labors of love. I know it makes me feel glad all over when I have done anything to make any one happy.”

“That is the way I feel,” said Izilda. “It may be selfish, but I do love to see the light come into people's faces when I have done or said anything to make them glad.”

“And I want them to thank me, too,” observed Janita.

“Well, I don’t know about that,” returned Izilda. “Words are not necessary, after all, when the eyes and the face speak. If they *look* their thanks that is sufficient for me.”

“I think the story was written to teach us the beauty of humility,” said Emilia. “Oh, it is such a lovely trait, and one who has it is doubly good, like the saint who ‘simply went about his daily life diffusing virtue as the star diffuses light and the flower perfume, without even being aware of it.’”

“What a blessed life that would be!” said Izilda, “and how few of us can attain to it! If I can do good and know it, I shall be satisfied, though I do hope it will never make me either vain or selfish.”

“*You* could never be that!” declared Emilia, with a warm caress. “I know you will do much good, and you will be all the better for doing good.”

“I do hope I can. It is my earnest desire to make my life of as much cheer and benefit to others as I can. Miss Mary told me such a beautiful thing the other day. It was about the sculptor* who made that famous statue of

* Horatio Greenough.

Washington, the first president of Miss Mary's country. Well, this sculptor used to say, 'I don't want to leave this world until I have done something in it to prove that it was God himself who sent me here.' Was not that a noble desire? Surely no life will be in vain that is lived up to it."

Izilda continued:

"I have often thought I should like to be a teacher to my people, a missionary like our dear Miss Mary. Oh, what a grand life it is to go about doing good, to strengthen the weak, cheer the sorrowful, comfort the distressed, and to each and all tell the sweet and beautiful story of Jesus on the cross. Oh, if I could only do it!"

"You can, dear Izilda, I know that you can in time," assured Emilia. "I heard Miss Mary say that you were of so much help to her now, when she went to talk to the people; that, knowing the language so well, you could maket hem understand things that she could not."

"It is so sweet of Miss Mary to say this; I think I can help her a little. But, oh, I do long for the day to come when I can tell the beautiful, beautiful story myself; when I can give joy for sorrow, light for darkness.

“Oh,” she continued, clasping her hands earnestly together, while her eyes glowed with an intense feeling, “oh, I know what it is to stand in the darkness and grope for what cannot be found. I know what it is to ask questions and to have no answers given that can satisfy the heart. I know what it is to stand dazed, bewildered, in the midst of a path along which there are no sights to cheer, no pleasant places to invite the feet to rest; but, instead, mystery, doubt, perplexity, and the gnawing hunger of desires unfed. For the Bible, crosses, images, and senseless beads; for the prayers of the heart, words mumbled to the Virgin and saints; for bread, a stone; for truth, falsehood; and for light, darkness.

“Can you wonder that I want to go and make all this right? that I want to sow the seeds of joy in these barren wastes of sorrow? that I want to tell my people that which will cause the bowed heads to be erect with gladness, and prove the sweet balm to heal their wounded hearts?”

“Courage, my Izilda, courage,” whispered Emilia, with her arms around her, “in God’s own good time it will come.”

“Yes, in God’s own good time, perhaps, but, oh, it seems so far away, and I am so weak

and helpless, I make haste so slowly. I could hardly help even one soul to the light now in my own feebleness."

Ah, if she could have known how soon it was to be proven otherwise!

The days sped by; then the bolt that Izilda had been expecting fell, and almost from a clear sky, a clear sky because of late she had ceased to think of it and thus expectancy did not exist.

One morning a letter was handed her. It was from her mother. The Father Anselmo had returned, and he had told her mother all that had passed at his interview with Izilda. He had been detained on his journey, hence the lateness of his communication.

The Senhora Izabel was astonished, ashamed, nay, outraged. To think a daughter of hers could have acted so! To think that her Izilda, raised as she had been in the very bosom of the church, and taught from her earliest infancy to honor its teachings and reverence its teachers, *could* so far forget herself and the mother that had nourished her, as to be unmindful of her duty, nay, downright disrespectful to a priest of the holy church! Why, she had not even touched his hand, to say nothing of the failure to ask for his blessing! What folly,

what madness *had* she committed? Did she think to pursue a course like this and to be blessed? Nay, only evil and woe could come of it!

But the Senhora knew what was the matter, so she wrote; it had all come through the abominable teachings of that school to which she had been sent, and against the going to which she, the mother, had been so strongly opposed. No good could follow it, she had declared from the first, and, it seemed, had declared truly.

Now all this must end. Izilda must come home. They could not so outrage the church as to permit her to remain after what had happened. She must prepare to leave. It only remained now for her father to send the letter requesting her release, and that he surely would do.

But instead of the letter, in a few days came the summons that her father had suddenly been taken very ill, and that she must hasten home. Old Manuel had been sent to bring her.

Poor Izilda was in much distress, and there were many to sorrow with her; for she had grown close to the hearts of teachers and schoolmates.

She clung to Miss Mary to the last, and with

her arms around her neck poured out all her heartache and sorrow.

What a wrench it was to leave this dear teacher! And to think she, Izilda, would probably never come back to the school again! Oh, it almost broke her heart. But now there was the worst sorrow, her father's illness. Could it be that it was really serious? Izilda could not bear to think of that now. It was too dreadful to entertain even as a thought.

She questioned old Manuel earnestly, closely, but he could not tell her much. He only knew that the Senhor was sick. He had not seen him, because the doctors had said he must not be disturbed any more than could be helped.

It was a sad, trying ride, so different from the last time she had come over this old familiar road. Then her heart had been so light, so full of anticipation, so happy, even though she were leaving home for a time.

One thing, however, came to comfort her, and, oh, what light it brought amid the shadows! She was carrying that back with her that she had not brought away—a heart that had found, oh, so sweet and so true a Saviour, and that loved him with all its force. Whatever came, that joy could not be taken away. Even the sorrows of death could not swallow it up. Like

the star behind the pall of clouds, it would shine forth again in all its radiance and beauty. Like the landscape that the rain-tears had made misty for a while, it would show up all the clearer when the sun came once again.

How familiar and homelike the old house looked among the trees! Was there another anywhere half so dear? How long it seemed now since she had left it! and yet the days of her school-life had gone by so pleasantly.

Izilda's heart began to stir, then to beat louder and louder as they neared the house. How would her mother receive her? Would she be very, very angry? Would she even refuse to speak to her at first? Oh, that bitter, bitter letter she had written—that letter in which she had as good as said that Izilda was no longer a daughter of hers, because of what she had done. Did her mother really mean it? Would she cast her out of her heart? Was it only to a father she was going home?

Izilda had not long to wait for answers to those questions, for there in the door stood her mother, yes, her own, own mother, the very same dear mother she had left three months before, and straight from her eyes shone a welcome, such a welcome as only an own dear mother can give.

With a glad cry Izilda sprang up the steps and rushed to the embrace of those waiting arms. Church, priests, all were for the moment forgotten as Senhora Izabel folded her daughter to her heart. It was the mother, and the mother alone, that had spoken in that welcome.

After a few moments she seemed to recover herself and recollect a line of action she had doubtless planned, for she said, a little coldly, "Your father is impatient to see you. He has asked several times if you had come. You had better go to him now."

"O mother, I do hope he is not in any danger," and there was a quick catch in Izilda's breath as the words were spoken.

"No, Izilda, I think not; at least not now, but the physicians say he must be careful and take things as easy as he can. He has tried to do so much of late, and there have been so many business perplexities. But go to him now; he has longed so for you to come."

Izilda walked rapidly across the hall, passed through the sitting-room, then reaching the door of her father's bed-room, opened it and entered.

The Senhor lay in bed propped up by pillows. He was very pale, and his face, too, had grown

so thin that a thrill of pain went through Izilda's heart as she noted it.

As the Senhor caught sight of his daughter he smiled and held out his arms.

With a quick little cry Izilda sprang towards them; then, as they fell about her shoulders, she sank on her knees beside the bed, murmuring, “*A bencao meu pai*” (your blessing, father).

How easy the words were to come for this own dear father, which even fear could not wring from her lips for the priest. How sweet it was to say them now! how natural! She did want him to bless her; she felt that even the light of the great joy that had come to her would grow dim without it.

The Senhor raised one feeble hand, and with it began to caress gently his daughter's glossy hair.

“It is yours, my child,” he said, “my blessing is yours.”

“But do you know all, my father? Did the *padre* tell you as well as my mother?”

“The Father Anselmo told me nothing, but from your mother I have it all.”

“And knowing all, you can still give me your blessing, father? You can still say, ‘Bless you, my child’?”

“Yes, my Izilda, knowing all, I can still give

you my blessing, and I do. Bless you, my dear one, now and always."

Izilda rose, and with all her heart in her eyes looked into her father's face.

"O father, can you, do you really know what it all means? Can you, have you comprehended it? Do you understand just what it is, the change that has come? Can you realize that my heart can no more follow the teachings of my mother's church—and yours?" she added, after a moment's pause. "Do you know I can never again believe in those things that Father Anselmo and the others teach? For, oh, I have found something so much better, so much truer, so much more satisfying in every way—a something that makes me so happy, oh! happier than I have ever been in all my life."

With a sudden uplifting of the eyelids the Senhor turned his head, and looked earnestly, intently, into his daughter's face.

"What is the something you have found, my Izilda?" he asked, and what an amount of anxious expectancy there was in his voice and eyes!

"I have found a Saviour, a dear Saviour who is all my own, and to whom I can go myself, without having to ask the Virgin to intercede with him for me. O father, it is too bad," she

broke off suddenly, “the way the priests make the people believe about the Virgin. She was only a woman after all, a mortal like the rest of us, and though she was honored above all other women in being selected as the mother of the Saviour, yet it is so foolish and sinful, too, to suppose that she can have any part in the forgiveness of sins, or that she ought to be prayed to as well as God the Father and Jesus our Saviour.”

“Izilda,” said the Senhor, suddenly, “what can this Saviour you have found do for you? What has he done for you?”

“O father,” Izilda said, as she sat upon the bed and leaned up against the pillows, while one arm went carelessly over him, “he has done more for me than ever was done before or ever I thought could be done; he has heard my prayers, ‘without money and without price,’ and sent me the sweet knowledge that my sins are forgiven.”

“‘Without money and without price,’” repeated the Senhor. “I like that, Izilda. It must indeed be a *true* religion that does not have to be paid for—bought as we’d buy an article at the store.”

“Oh! it *is* a true religion, father, the very truest in all the world, and in all the world

there is no other like it, for it is the only one. And it is such a sweet, beautiful religion, a religion that is lived in the heart communing with God, and not in the worship of senseless pictures and images of wood or stone."

"What would the Father Anselmo say to hear you say that, Izilda?"

"O father, I know. He would be very, very angry. He would say I was a heretic."

"And are you not, Izilda?"

"No, father."

"Then what are you, my dear?"

"One that was once blind, but that can now see; a sinner, saved by grace, dear father; a poor, wandering sheep till my Shepherd found me and led me safely to his fold."

"Izilda, dear?"

"Yes, father."

"Izilda, there is another one who is wandering who wants to find the fold. Can you point the way, my child?"

Izilda sat upright with the sudden joy and wonder of it all, but in the midst of it there was just enough doubt to prompt the question: "O father, what *can* you mean?" Her face was bent towards him, her lips apart, her eyes shining, her whole heart showing through them.

"I mean that I, too, want to go the way that my child says is so good a way ; I, too, want to find the fold and the Shepherd, Izilda," he continued, speaking slowly and with deep earnestness. "This is not a sudden making up of the mind, though it may seem so to you. I thought of it months ago, my dear one, even before you did. The religion that Father Anselmo and the other priests teach was not such, I felt, that made me the better and the happier. There was so much about it that would not bear a close look into, and the priests themselves showed so plainly their selfishness and greed. It made my heart sick to see some of the things that were done. I felt that such a religion could not guide my steps, satisfy my longings, nor save my soul. I must have something better, deeper, truer. I began to inquire, to ask questions of others, and to read. More than one book on the subject I have given careful investigation. Then I had my friend Raynor to help me in the midst of perplexities, though I have never let him see as much of my heart as I ought. This is where I have been wrong. I should have unburdened myself to him wholly—been fearless and candid. Then, long ago, I doubt not, the light would have come ; for, despite the thought I have given the

subject, dear one," he continued, laying his hand over Izilda's, "and the questions and the researches, there is much yet that is perplexing, so much that is in darkness and doubt. Oh! for light, light upon the darkness! Izilda, when you found this Saviour, how did you go to him? What did you say?"

"O father, I just went to him trusting and believing; feeling that he was not only everybody else's Saviour, but that he was *my* Saviour, my very own. I told him how sorry I was for all that I had done that was wrong, asked him to forgive me, and to keep me from doing wrong again. He heard me; I felt in my heart that he did. And, oh! it was such a joy to know, to feel, that the burden was gone, that there was no more doubting, no more perplexity, but that I had a dear Saviour to help me along all the way."

"That is a simple faith, a beautiful trust, Izilda. But will it be so easy for me?"

"Yes, father, just as easy."

"But you are a girl, Izilda, a pure and innocent girl. What have your few little sins amounted to in comparison with mine?"

"There is but the one remedy for *all* sin, dear father, and but the one way to the Forgiver."

“And that remedy, Izilda?”

“The blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth from all sin.”

“And the way?”

“Through faith and prayer. We are to *believe* that he is our Saviour and to accept him as such. Then we are to pray to him to give us what we need.”

“That does not seem hard.”

“It is not hard, dear father.”

“Izilda, pray. Pray, my child, ask that the light may come, that the trust may be mine, that my sins may be forgiven. I have not the words; I do not know how to pray for myself. You pray for me, dear; you know how. You have found *him*. You *know* him; I do not. I cannot afford to make any mistake. I *must* know the right way, for the time is doubtless short—short.”

Izilda needed no second bidding. She sank upon her knees, her father's hand clasped in hers, her head bowed upon it. She was almost overcome with emotion, and for a few moments the words could not be distinguished for the sobs that broke into them. But as the moments passed she gained courage and composure. Her sobs ceased, her thoughts came clear, the words began to flow from heart to lip, while

upward went the prayer, surely to the very throne of the Most High. If faith, earnestness, if insistence could bring the answer, then the answer would come.

“I *know* the way,” said the Senhor; “yes, I *know* the way,” he repeated, as Izilda, having finished the prayer, still knelt by the bed, her arms about him.

“O father!” and her whole heart went forth in the exclamation; “then you will be sure to *find* it.”

“I hope so, Izilda.”

“I pray for it, father. Oh! I am not going to let myself think but that you will. You *must*, dear father! And, oh, you must pray yourself. Ask Jesus to forgive you. Only trust him. Think of him as *your* Saviour. *Believe* that he will hear you when you call upon him. Then call, father, oh! call with *all* your might. That is all; he will do the rest.”

“All, Izilda?”

“Yes, dear father.”

“Dear, I believe *now*; I believe he is *my* Saviour. Have you not told me so? And did *you* not find him? If he is *your* Saviour, of course he is *mine*, too. I—”

But Izilda could wait to hear no more. She sprang to her feet. She bent over her father,

a great breaker of joy surging in her heart and sending waves of light to her eyes.

“Why, father! why, father! you are there now. If he is *your Saviour*, what more can there be?”

“But I do not know how to get to him—to *get to him*, child. Do you not understand?”

“Yes, father, I do. But you *will* get to him. I feel that you will. Only *trust* him, father; only believe that he will hear when you call. Then he will answer and will show you the way.”

“Bless you, my child! bless you! You asked for my blessing when you first came. It was given. Take it again, dear one, for now it has a fuller, sweeter, deeper meaning. Izilda, your father blesses you, and his whole heart goes out with that blessing. May all the happiness, the joy you have brought to me through the years you have been mine, and now the light, too, of this great comfort of all, fall back upon your head multiplied a thousand-fold.”

Izilda opened her lips to speak, but ere she could do so Inez suddenly pushed open the door and entered the room. “Mamma wants to see you,” she said to Izilda; “she is waiting for you in her room.”

Izilda stooped and kissed her father. “Oh!

your words have made me happy, so happy!" she said in his ear, as she bent above him. All my life long they will make music in my heart."

"As you have made it in mine since you came a laughing baby, my Izilda. Bless you, my daughter!"

Again the words, once more the blessing, and the thrill of joy indescribable at Izilda's heart. Whatever might come, her father had blessed her.

CHAPTER X.

"WHOSE I AM, HIM I SERVE."

OUTSIDE the door Inez was waiting for her.

"I guess you are going to catch it," she volunteered with a grimace. "The Father Anselmo has been here, and he was shut up with mamma an hour or more. He is just gone now, after eating up all the cake there was and drinking a whole bottle of wine. My! how he *can* eat and drink! I'd go and live with the pigs if I were as greedy!

"Izilda," she continued, as she saw her sister did not answer her, "did I not tell you you were going to catch it? You can believe it or not, but its so. You will see directly. They were talking about you. I listened at the door, and I heard them."

"O Inez!" and now Izilda not only spoke to her, but she looked at her reproachfully, "how *could* you do that?"

"Well, I can't see the harm in it, and I should think you would be glad, for I heard what they were saying about you and can tell you. They said ——"

Izilda placed her hand over Inez's mouth.

"Do not tell me, dear," she said, gently. "There is no need; I will soon know."

"I guess you won't!" declared Inez, now that her mouth was free again. "I don't think mamma will tell you. Father Anselmo said so many horrid things; Izilda, I want to know if you have really put an end to the Virgin Mary? Its awfully funny if you have, and I don't understand it, don't see how you managed to do it."

Izilda stopped, staring at her blankly. She was both amazed and shocked. What *could* the child mean?

"Well," continued Inez, "he said such conduct as you had been guilty of had pierced the Virgin through and through the heart, and so, of course, she is dead, for no one could live with their heart in that fix. Now we shall not have to say prayers to her any more, I guess."

"O Inez!" and now Izilda took the child by the shoulders and gazed earnestly into her eyes. "How shocking of you to talk so, and of one who was the mother of Jesus our Saviour! You should have more reverence, Inez, dear; though," she added, in a lower tone, and as if she must, "you need not say prayers to her any more."

"Not say prayers to the Virgin? Well, that *is* funny! But I don't know that I'll care," she continued, frankly. "Its awful hard being on one's knees so long, and there are so many beads to count. And shall I not have to count beads either, Izilda?"

"I hope not, Inez."

She seemed on the point of saying more, but, apparently taking a second thought, turned away from Inez, and, opening the door of her mother's room, entered.

The Senhora Izabel was evidently in great excitement. She was sitting in her sewing-chair, her face very white except for a feverish spot on either cheek, her eyes shining brightly, while she worked her hands nervously together as they lay upon her lap.

"Izilda," she cried, as soon as she caught sight of her daughter, "is this really true that I have heard?"

"What, mother?" Izilda asked.

As she spoke she crossed over to her mother, and, sinking down at her feet, clasped her hands in hers.

The Senhora withdrew her hands, though she did not otherwise repulse her.

"This that the Father Anselmo has told me," she replied. "Oh, I cannot believe it until you

yourself tell me it is true! And you will not do that, Izilda; I feel, I know you will not! Do you know what he says, Izilda? Listen, and deny it. You can! you must! He says that you have been seen, again and again, at the church of the heretics in Piracicaba. But this is not all; that you not only go to the church, but that you have been heard openly to say that you believed in this religion as the only one direct from God—this religion that would strike at the very altars of the church of your mother, that denounces her priests, vilifies her teachings, and would tear the very crown from the head of our Blessed Mother of Heaven. Speak, Izilda; say it is not true! Say you have not been to the church, say it was not *you* who stood at the bedside of old Maria Farias and told her the Virgin could not help her to heaven, and that all her prayers to her were in vain. Speak, Izilda, and say to me that none of these things are true; that they are, in short, false, and that the Father Anselmo has been misinformed.”

Izilda rose from her position at her mother's feet. She was very pale, but there was a steady light in her eyes, while the hand she placed upon the back of the chair did not tremble.

“Listen to me, dear mother,” she began. “Please listen to all I have to tell, and bear with me patiently until I am through.”

“Izilda,” said her mother, somewhat sharply, “I do not want to listen to anything that will take you some time to tell, at least not now. I want you to answer my questions, that and nothing more. Have you not heard them?”

“Yes, mother.”

“Then answer them. Afterwards you may tell me other things if you desire. Is it really true that you have been to the church of the heretics, and more than one time? Did you say that you believed their religion to be the true one? And was it really *you* who dared to state to old Maria so awful a thing as that with reference to our blessed mother? Speak, Izilda.”

“Mother, it is true. I *have* been to the Protestant church, and many times; I *have* said I believed their religion to be true, and so say I now, and feel from my heart this moment. And I did carry to old Maria the comfort in her dying hour of hearing of one who could give her the help the Virgin never could. I told her of God the Father, and of Jesus the Saviour of men, and of the Holy Spirit that enters and fills our hearts with peace that is indescribable.”

The Senhora Izabel arose from her chair. She was pale and trembling, so much so that her knees almost refused to support her.

“What have you done?” she asked. “What *have* you done? The Father Anselmo said it was true, but I could not, would not, believe him. And it all comes from going to that Protestant school; I felt it, I knew it would be. Why did I *ever* consent to your going to the detestable place? O Izilda, child, you *must* come back again! You *must* renounce all these things! They will ruin you if you do not. There will be a curse to follow you. It is ever thus with those who leave the church. And it will ruin us, too, for your woe will be our woe. But it is not too late. Come back, come back, Izilda! The Father Anselmo said it would not be too late, if only you would show the proper penitence, and do the penance he will direct. You must write and tell him that you are ready, that you will.”

“Mother,” said Izilda, quietly, “I can do neither of these things. If I did I should be acting a falsehood, and my God would punish me as no church or priest on earth could do.”

The Senhora Izabel grew angry now. The mother had plead long enough. Now the woman, true to her family, to her church, to

her Virgin, must show herself. The Father Anselmo had hinted that she would be apt to be too lenient, and it seemed that he was right.

“Izilda,” she said, sternly, “this cannot continue; it *shall not*. If you are filled with such folly that you cannot see the ruin you are facing, then I, your mother, must take the thing in hand. I will send for Father Anselmo. I will beg him to forgive you. I will entreat him to plead with the Virgin in your behalf. Oh, rash girl, if you could but see where you stand! How can you overwhelm us in such woe? But it must not, it shall not, continue!”

“Mother, listen to me,” said Izilda, “I cannot do this thing; no, not even if you drive me to it; neither can the Father Anselmo force me. I am not my own now. I belong to another, to One who has bought me with a price. I love him who first loved me—loved me so well that he died for me; yes, I love him,” she continued, “whose I am, and him will I serve, and him only, mother,” she continued, approaching her mother, and attempting to place her hand upon her shoulder, “mother —”

But the Senhora Izabel motioned her from the room.

“When you have that to say to which I care to listen, then you may come back to me. In the meantime, I shall send for the Father Anselmo; and remember, if you do not do just as he desires, you are no longer a daughter of mine.”

But before the Father Anselmo could be brought, for he had gone to a distant part of his work at the time, they were indeed overwhelmed with woe, but woe of a different kind.

The day after Izilda's return her father grew suddenly worse. By the next the physician candidly told them there was no hope.

The Senhor was fully conscious and able to converse with them, though not to any considerable extent, because of his weak condition.

When she found that her husband was dying, the poor Senhora was nearly wild with grief, for she was a true wife, and loved her husband devotedly. Her first thought was of the priest.

“The Father Anselmo must be summoned,” she said. “Manuel must ride until he finds him.”

“No, dear,” said her husband, who overheard her; “do not summon the Father Anselmo. It is not necessary.”

His wife was astonished. “Not summon the Father Anselmo?” she repeated. “Surely you

do not know what you are saying. Oh! but," she continued, "I guess you mean that he is too far away, and that you will have one of the priests who are nearer."

"No," he said again, gently; "not that. It is not necessary to have any priest at all."

Not only astonishment, but horror, seized the Senhora now. "Not send for any priest? Oh! if he does not come and absolve you; if he does not sprinkle the holy water on you, your soul will be lost."

Her husband motioned her to come nearer the bed. As she did so, he took her hand, stroking it with his feeble fingers, trying thus to calm and soothe her. "I do not need the priest, nor the absolution from the priest, Iza-bel; neither am I afraid to die without the holy water. It is not that that can save my soul, but the blood of my Saviour Jesus Christ."

Izilda, who was sitting on the other side of the bed, her face buried in her hands, felt a glad thrill go through her heart at these words. At last, at last, he was coming to the light.

The Senhor continued. Holding his wife's hand, and still stroking it in his caressing way, he told her much of what he had told Izilda two days before. But he told her, too, some-

thing he had not yet told Izilda, something that made that faithful one's heart almost leap from her bosom with joy when she heard it. He told her that during the past night, while he had been praying earnestly, fervently, the precious knowledge had come that his sins were forgiven. Now all was peace and the way so clear. He begged, he implored his wife to accept this Saviour as her own, the Saviour he had found so precious. He endeavored to show her how vain, how shallow, how false, were the practices of the Romish Church; how selfish and overbearing the character of its priests. He reasoned with her that such worship as they were taught to give to the images and pictures of the Virgin and the saints could not save from sin. The Virgin and the saints were but mortal, after all. Only God could hear and answer prayer; and pardon for sins could come only through the blood of Jesus Christ shed for sinners.

The poor Senhora was nearly distracted. She wept, she wrung her hands, she implored her husband not to die in that state of mind. He would be lost! lost! She pleaded with him to let her send for the priest; that he, and he alone, could prepare him to die. She entreated him to at least have the sign of the cross placed

upon his forehead and the holy water sprinkled over him ; then there would be some hope that his poor soul would go out in peace.

"I do not need the sign of the cross upon my forehead," said the Senhor, "for it is in my heart ; neither do I need any water sprinkled upon me, but only the blood of my Saviour, which was shed for me. Through that I have found forgiveness for my sins. All is peace, peace." As he spoke he turned his eyes to look at Izilda. There was no need for words. Soul spoke to soul ; and though the sorrow of losing her father was crushing her heart, yet beneath it there was the glad thrill of joy that the way was so clear, that he had found the Saviour.

Two days later the Senhor died—died with the same simple, trusting faith, believing fully in the power of the Saviour he had found to make clear all the way.

The Father Anselmo was furious when he heard the true state of affairs, and endeavored to vent all his spleen upon the poor Senhora. But for once Izilda showed herself brave enough to confront the priest. Her mother could not be seen, she assured him. She was too prostrated by her grief. Afterwards, when the Senhora herself expressed the desire to have the

Father Anselmo come to her, Izilda persuaded her to wait a little while longer, at least until she was more composed. In the meantime Izilda's heart was made glad by the number of questions her mother asked her, clear, searching questions with reference to the new religion, for new it was to her, poor soul. Her husband's death and the manner of it had made a powerful impression upon the Senhora. Surely there *was* something in this religion, after all, that could help one to die as her husband had died. Why, he had gone away as calmly as though it were only a journey to some neighboring town; and how great had been his trust, his faith! not a single fear as to any torture for his soul in the hereafter, but, instead, "peace, peace!" as he had so repeatedly declared.

When at last she saw Father Anselmo, it was so unsatisfactory, nay, discouraging, for the priest was in a bad temper, and he said so many bitter things. What comfort *could* there be in one who showed so vindictive a spirit? Gradually the scales fell from the poor Senhora's eyes; gradually the faltering feet were led in the way; gradually her poor heart found comfort, soothing, then the joy indescribable. And through it all it was Izilda who comforted,

Izilda who guided, Izilda who brought the light to shine amid the darkness. And once she had said, “Oh! I am so weak, so ignorant, I could not lead even *one* soul to the light.” But instead of one soul, she had led two. And, oh! joy beyond words to express! they were the two of all others the dearest to her. Could the ardent desire of her heart have been more completely fulfilled?

Izilda’s joy was beyond words during those days, for not only had her dear mother accepted the Saviour, and with a glad, a full surrender, but many changes had come with it, changes that brought Izilda the deepest of heart-happiness. Among other things, they were going to Piracicaba to live, and Izilda was to go back to the mission school. Her mother had said it, and Izilda knew that she meant it; now, too, the twins and Joachima could receive the instruction they ought to have. But in the midst of her joy Izilda thought often and often of her father. How much she missed him! Oh! if he only could have lived! What a comfort, what a help he would have been to her! But she must not show her sadness, her dependency, to her mother; she must be all the cheer to her she could.

What a joyous going back that was to the

seminary! How glad they all were to see her! It seemed she would be nearly smothered with caresses. But the sweetest greeting of all came from her dear Miss Mary. What a comfort, what a happiness it was, to feel those arms around her once more, and with her head on this dear teacher's shoulder to pour out everything that had happened since last they met.

That day in the school-room, when they had been reading the story of the Holy Shadow, Izilda had said to Emilia: "Oh! I want to go and make all this right; I want to sow the seed of joy in these barren wastes of sorrow!"

As the years passed on it seemed her desires were to be granted, for when she had grown from a slip of a girl into a full and noble womanhood, Izilda did become what she had so fervently hoped she might, "a teacher to her people, a missionary like her dear Miss Mary." Years before, with a courage born of her convictions and a faith wonderful in one so young, she had declared her loyalty to him who had bought her and made her free. "Whose I am, him I serve!" and through all the years these words formed the keynote of her brave, earnest, useful life. Like the Saint of the Holy Shadow, she went about doing good, caring naught for praise, desiring no word of commendation, so

good was done; and, like the Saint, too, the example of her beautiful, unselfish life was as the perfume of flowers that know nothing of their own sweetness, or as the light of the stars, unconscious of the radiance they give.

